





CAMPBELLISM EXPOSED;

OR

STRICTURES ON THE PECULIAR TENETS

OF

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

BY REV. WILLIAM PHILLIPS,

LATE ASSISTANT EDITOR OF THE WESTERN CHRISTIAN
ADVOCATE.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED
A MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

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The following chapters were first published in the Western Christian Advocate, in twenty-six numbers. The first number was dated, January 30th, 1835, the last appeared in April 1836. In consequence of the estimation in which they were held, many persons from different parts of the West, requested to have them collected and published in a volume. The Ohio Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church, at its last session held in Chillicothe, September 28th, 1836, unanimously requested our book agents to publish the strictures on Campbellism, as they are presented in this volume, now before the reader.

That the work possesses real merit, every competent person who peruses it, will freely acknowledge. It must not, however, be forgotten, that it is a posthumous work and of course has more defects than though it had issued from under the author's own correcting hand.

Indeed the writer did not contemplate, that what passed from his pen, in the haste of the weekly press, would afterwards be collected and formed into a volume. Had he lived, large editions would have been made, fewer inaccuracies would appear, and a much more perfect work would now be presented to the public. As it is, we are fully of the opinion that it will serve as a timely and effi-

cient check on one of the most pernicious systems of the present age, though couched under the imposing title of *the Ancient Gospel*.

The editors have made no alterations in the following pages from what they were when published in the *Western Christian Advocate*, except a very few verbal amendments, or the omission of those concluding or introductory clauses in the numbers, by which they are reduced to the form of chapters under appropriate heads. A table of contents is also added which the reader will find very convenient as an aid to reference.

C. ELLIOTT.

L. L. HAMLINE.

Book Room, Cincinnati, *January*, 1837.

## MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR.

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The Rev. WILLIAM PHILLIPS, author of the following work, was born of pious parents, on the 7th day of May, 1797, in Jessamine county, state of Kentucky. He was religiously educated, was frequently impressed with the necessity of religion in early life, and often thought he would become a christian. When he was a youth, after laboring through the day, he would spend the evening in writing the effusions of his mind, both in poetry and prose. Many pieces of these early productions are still in possession of his family. When he arrived at mature age, he turned his attention to political affairs, resisted the divine impressions, and abandoned his youthful employments. To free himself from religious restraint, he read sceptical books, till infidel sentiments made considerable impression on his mind; though he still retained a high regard for morality. In this state of mind he lived till he was settled in life, and had the charge of a rising family. The following account of his conviction for sin, was related by himself at lovefeast, as a part of his religious experience, and communicated to us by one who heard him at the time.

“One morning,” said he, “I returned home in a melancholy state of feeling, after having

spent the night from home, engaged in some political feats. I took my seat in a room by myself. Very soon my eldest son, about eight years old, came to me, and said, *B.—has experienced religion*; and then inquired, *What is religion?* Here conviction seized my mind, for I could not answer the questions of the child. I said,—Is it possible, that I, who was blessed with a religious education, have raised a child to this age, who inquires of me what religion is, and I cannot tell him! I then resolved to reform my life, and examine the evidences of christianity.”

He did not, like too many, delay this great work, but set about it with his usual diligence. He was soon thoroughly convinced of the divine reality of religion, and joined the Methodist Episcopal Church, as a seeker. He earnestly sought the Lord with bitter sighs and tears; but his mourning was soon turned into joy. Five days after he joined the church, he received the evidence of his acceptance, at Old Fort meeting house, in Montgomery county, Ky. It was manifest to all, that he was the subject of a great change. He shortly after felt intensely the worth of souls, and believed that he was moved by the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel; of which he afterwards gave ample testimony. On the 27th of December, 1828, he was licensed to preach as a local preacher, by the quarterly meeting conference of Mount Sterling circuit. In this capacity he labored with success, till he found that his field of labor



was too circumscribed. He was duly recommended and received into the Kentucky conference in the fall of 1831, at its session at Louisville, after he had labored as a local preacher for nearly three years. He was appointed successively to Winchester and Lexington circuits, and Newport and Covington station; having been reappointed to the two last places, so as to serve each two years in succession, except the time that elapsed between his appointment by the General conference and the termination of his conference year, which was still shortened by his unexpected death. He received deacon's and elder's orders at the regular periods in which these offices are usually conferred. He performed the duties of assistant editor to the Western Christian Advocate one year before he was appointed to that office by the suffrage of the General Conference in May, 1836. He was selected by this body, under the conviction that his talents and attainments qualified him for the duties of an editor, and in full expectation of much efficient editorial usefulness. But alas! how uncertain are human expectations. For three weeks and two days only, after the adjournment of conference was he permitted to serve the church.

On the 22d of June, 1836, he was confined to bed by a violent attack of fever. For several days previous to this, he felt manifest indications of an approaching assault of severe sickness. During his confinement of six weeks and two days, he suffered much pain of body,

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which was borne with great patience. When the fever was high, he was affected with delirium, but when the fever abated, he was in the full exercise of his mental faculties. Shortly after he was taken ill, he gave instructions to his afflicted wife, respecting her concerns and future residence, intimating to her, that the present disease would prove fatal. He also called his children to his bedside, and solemnly and without tears, yet deeply affected, gave them the *charge* and instructions of a parent on the verge of eternity. In his moments of self-possession, both when asked and unsolicited, he expressed himself strongly, yet very humbly, respecting his confidence in God and the enjoyments of religion, which he evidently possessed in a high degree. At one time, when it was thought he was dying, he was asked, "If all was well?" he calmly replied, "I feel for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." He then spoke of the goodness and mercy that had followed him all the days of his life. At another time, when he complained of a pain in his breast, it was said to him, "when we get to heaven we shall then be done suffering. Pain and affliction will be over, and God shall wipe tears from every eye. Do you expect to get there?" He replied, "Yes; my soul sometimes exults at the prospect." And with a faltering voice, he added, "Yes, glory to God." At another time, he said to a friend, "My mind is entirely at peace. It is doubtful whether I shall recover from this sickness;

but to me death has no terror, the grave no gloom. If it were the Lord's will, I would like to live, that I might make some better provision for the temporal and spiritual welfare of my family. But why do I talk thus? The Lord is sufficient. I now wish to leave this with you as my testimony, that my hope is in Christ, through whose blood I shall conquer. I now feel none but Jesus can do suffering sinners good." Again he said, "In retrospecting the past, contemplating the present, or looking forward to the future, I have nothing to fear." There is no doubt in the minds of any of his friends concerning his triumphant entrance into the paradise of God. He departed this life on the night of the 4th of August, 1836, at a half past twelve, in the city of Cincinnati. His remains were carried to Wesley chapel on Saturday the 6th, at 10 o'clock, A. M. where an impressive sermon was delivered by the Rev. J. F. Wright, from Psalms 46. 10. "Be still and know that I am God." His body is deposited in the Methodist burying ground, till the resurrection of the just. In his death, the editorial corps has lost a valuable member, and the church has been deprived of the services of one of her most faithful and efficient sons.

As a *christian*, he is to be ranked among the excellent. Entire reliance on the mercy of God and the vicarious atonement of Jesus Christ, was the strongest and most prominent exercise of his mind, during his affliction; and indeed this was the settled disposition of his

very soul, from the time he first embraced religion; but which increased as he grew in grace, so as to form an abiding firm exercise of his mind. His reliance on the Redeemer was such, that,

“ His blood and righteousness  
He made his only plea.”

The expression, *Lord have mercy*, which he repeated much during his sickness, indicated to those who heard him, that reliance on Jesus Christ was, with him, permanent and unwavering. In *patience* he possessed his soul to such a degree, that the severest pains could not wrest a murmur from his lips.

His *ministerial gifts and qualifications* were considered to be of the most useful kind. The following extract of a letter from an aged and experienced member of the church, will place the ministerial character of brother Phillips in a very amiable light:—

“ While we would cast in our mite in honor of his christian character, and for the encouragement of others to follow his example, we being intimately acquainted with him for the two years he travelled Lexington circuit, Ky., our house being almost his constant home once in four weeks, as he traveled round his circuit, and we who have been acquainted with Methodist preachers for near fifty years, and some of us strict observers of men and things for more than forty years, are more than willing to give in our testimony to the christian and evan-

gelical or apostolical character of brother Phillips. And first, a more pious, studious, grave, cheerful, humble, loving, laborious and effective preacher we have never known. In a word, he seemed all goodness, not only for a short time, (as too many often are) but all the time alike good. In the pulpit, whether the congregations were large or small, he was like a lamp to light up their intellects. His doctrines, so pure and evangelical; his reasoning so profound, his language so appropriate, that all acknowledged him much of a master workman. In company he was very social and friendly; in our family he was always instructive; unto the aged he was reverential; with the young he was familiar, and acted much of the philosopher; while all his language and deportment seemed seasoned with grace and warm affection. We recognize him this moment, fresh in our memories. His almost constant practice in the winter nights, was to instruct our daughters and sons in the rudiments of singing, as also in the way of salvation, with several other branches of useful instruction. He often put us in mind of the old Methodist preacher, that some of us knew nearly fifty years ago in old Virginia, that used to preach at my grandfather's. We were acquainted also with the circuit preachers that preached at my father's for several years in Kentucky, where the preachers made their home. Among those preachers were but few Phillipses to be found. For twenty years or more, we have not known

a more excellent and profitable man than brother William Phillips. But he is gone to glory. Is it possible that we are to hear from him no more this side of heaven?"

To this unadorned and simple testimony other accounts precisely correspond.

His attainments as a writer place him deservedly, if not among the foremost writers, at least in that respectable class which would raise him several degrees above mediocrity. But as he was called away at the early age of thirty-nine, and therefore before he had opportunity to come fairly before the public, it would be difficult to present him in his real character before the world. His writings in the *Western Christian Advocate*, over his proper signature, have evident marks of accurate research, sound judgment and respectable attainments. Had he turned his attention to writing at an earlier period of his life, or had Providence spared him longer, he would probably have held a prominent place among the writers of the present age.

Brother Phillips was a little above the ordinary height, and rather spare. His personal appearance was not only agreeable, but might be considered dignified. His manners were courteous and pleasing, manifesting a disposition to be friendly to all; so that even the stranger was often prepossessed in his favor; but he was respected most by those who knew him best. He was truly a son of peace; and

though he considered it his duty to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, he delighted not in controversy. Yet into this he was willing to enter sooner than yield up any portion of truth.





# CAMPBELLISM EXPOSED.

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## CHAPTER I.

Introduction of the subject—Mr. Campbell's doctrine of Baptism stated—Texts brought to support Campbellism considered, viz. Acts ii. 38. Jo. iii. 5. &c. Mark xvi. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Titus iii. 21.

Ours is a fluctuating world. Its fashions pass away, and the opinions of communities and of men so frequently change, that *old things* sometimes *become new*. We live in an age when some of the errors of antiquity have been revived and remodeled, and forced upon the world under the imposing name of "the ancient gospel;" but more commonly, and appropriately called "Campbellism," after Mr. A. Campbell, their chief propagator. And as this *system*, which is in reality "*another gospel*," has made the west its principal theatre, where, though maimed and crippled, it is still struggling for existence, some notice of it may not, perhaps, be "labor in vain." The present is, therefore, designed as the *first* of a few essays upon this subject.

There seems a remarkable proneness in fallen man, to make "the kingdom of God *meat* and *drink*," by substituting *rites*, *ceremonies*, and *objects of sense*, for *spiritual things*, and

*spiritual enjoyments.* That man, after his expulsion from paradise, retained some knowledge of the true God, is a reasonable conclusion, and is clearly deducible from the 1st chapter of the epistle to the Romans. But “when they knew God, they glorified him not as God.” The idea of a Spiritual Being, to whom they could have no access through the medium of external sense, did not suit their depraved minds. Hence, forgetting *that* God, whom they could not *see*, they adored the sun, moon, and stars, and creeping reptiles, and graven images, which they could *see* and *feel*. And thus it is probable that the propensity above mentioned, led the world into idolatry. At an early period of the christian church, some of the fathers, yielding to this propensity, endeavored to give their religion a degree of splendor, that it might make a powerful impression upon the senses ; but their efforts corrupted the pure stream of gospel truth, and marred the beauty and spirituality of divine worship. Witness, the invocation of saints, the veneration of relics, and the use of pictures and images—things unsanctioned by the Word of God, and tending to divert the mind from the true object of worship. Here we see man’s disposition to substitute *material things* for *spiritual* ; and this disposition, aided, perhaps, by a too *literal* interpretation of a few passages of Scripture, has been a most fruitful source of error to the christian church, as facts developed in her history, abundantly prove.

The Roman Catholic church, receding from the simplicity and purity of worship, as taught in the Bible, arrived at a point where the idea of feeding in a *spiritual manner, by faith*, upon the *broken body and shed blood* of our Lord, was too refined and mysterious for her votaries ; and, hence, seizing upon the Savior's words, " 'This is my body—this is my blood' "—and interpreting them to *mean just what they say*, they taught that the consecrated *bread and wine*, are converted into the *real and literal body and blood of the Lord*, so that the identical body which had been born of the Virgin Mary, is offered by the priest and eaten by the communicants. Thus originated *transubstantiation* in the 13th century—a doctrine, which, though opposed by the common sense of every man, and the obvious import of Scripture, is still retained by that church.

But long before transubstantiation was heard of, another error, originating from the same fountain, had been brought into the church. Nicodemus could not comprehend how a man could be *born of the Spirit*, and this matter seems to have been equally dark and mysterious to some of the early christians ; who endeavoring to render the subject tangible, sought a substitute for this *spiritual birth*, and found it in *water*. A few elliptical phrases and sentences in the New Testament, such as, "be baptized for the remission of sins"—"be baptized and wash away thy sins"—afforded a pretext for this change. Thus the Scripture

doctrine, of justification by *faith*, in the merits of the Redeemer, was set aside. This was one of the first departures of the church from the sacred truths of the gospel, and to this *vital error* may be traced much of that *ignorance of spiritual things*, and that intellectual gloom which covered the church in the dark ages of papal supremacy.

That the church of Rome, (after having converted the sacraments into *matter*, and taught that "sensible material things, work by the Almighty power of God,") should receive this view of the efficacy of an ordinance, and teach that, "baptism, when administered by a priest having a good intention, of itself applies the merits of Christ to the person baptized, and washes away all previous sins," is not surprising. But who could have dreamed that a Protestant *reformer*, in the nineteenth century, claiming exemption, alike, from Catholicism and "sectarianism," would rake up WATER REGENERATION from the dregs of papal rubbish, and make it a leading feature of his reformation? This Mr. Campbell has done. I do not assert that his views on this subject are precisely those of the Catholic church, but they are *substantially* the same. Each makes baptism necessary to the remission of sins—a *sine qua non* in the salvation of man. The following quotations from Mr. Campbell's Millennial Harbinger—*extra*, No. 1, will show that we do not misrepresent him: "If we speak Scripturally we must use these terms (immersion,

regeneration, and conversion,) as all descriptive of the same thing.” “Remission of sins cannot in this life be received or enjoyed previous to immersion.” “Immersion *alone* is the act of turning to God.” “No man can enjoy the peace of God, or the hope of heaven, until he is immersed for the remission of sins.” These assertions clearly make baptism a saving ordinance; and I know not that any Papist ever used stronger language in pointing out its importance. And it is well known that these views are received and promulged by his adherents; who, universally, urge “*obedience*” (by which they mean *immersion*), as THE MEANS of obtaining remission of sins. Consequently, Mr. C’s “*ancient gospel*” is literally a *gospel of water*, for upon its principles, without water there could be no salvation; and *his reformation*, taking a retrograde direction, goes back to embrace a *radical error*, which before the time of Luther, had almost driven the spirit of christianity from the church; and which, if now received, must *reform us back* to that gloomy period, and enshroud us in darkness, far worse than that which came upon Egypt.

The writings of Mr. Campbell form the *creed* of his followers. To ascertain his opinion upon any fundamental point, is to learn theirs. The quotations already made, show his views of baptism to be nearly related to the Papistical notion of the “*opus operatum*” of the sacraments; but, to make “assurance doubly sure,” and for the information of those who

may not have been favored with this new version of Popery, the following additional quotations, from his "*Millennial Harbinger*," are presented: "It is not our faith in God's promises of remission, but our *going down into the water, that obtains the remission of sins.*" "Immersion is the means divinely appointed for our actual enjoyment of this first and greatest of blessings." The reader will understand that the *great blessing* mentioned here is justification or remission of sins. And this, we are told, is to be obtained by "*going down into the water.*"

Now it is not intended in these essays to give a higher coloring to any feature of Campbellism, than his writings, and the practice of his adherents will warrant. Such an attempt would do them injustice, and could only result in the mortification and disgrace of the writer. Mr. Campbell is not, therefore, charged with placing the efficacy of baptism in the *intention of the baptizer*, or with teaching that baptism, *of itself*, literally washes away sin, and cleanses the soul. These notions are not his; and he has enough to answer for without bearing the sins and absurdities of others. He believes, or affects to believe, that *baptism is the means through which justification is extended to the sinner; and that we are only authorized to expect pardon in this act of obedience.* Sophistry, itself, cannot torture his language, in the above quotations, into any thing lower than is here stated; nor will the attempt be made;

for it is well known that his followers uniformly proclaim, *remission of sins through baptism*, as the burden of their song. And now, his belief on this point being settled, we join issue. He *affirms*, we *deny*. And notwithstanding the difficulties often attendant upon efforts for the establishment of a negative, we feel, in this case, fully competent to the task. But, in order that the mind of the reader may see the extent of its claims, and be the better prepared for its refutation, we propose, first of all, an examination of those texts of Scripture upon which his doctrine mainly depends for its establishment.

The point before us is the principal arch in the superstructure of Campbellism; and the keystone of this arch is found in Acts, ii, 38. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." From the expression, "for the remission of sins," it is argued that baptism is the means of obtaining this blessing. Much stress is, also, laid on the circumstances and situation of Peter when he spoke these words. To him, it is said, the keys of the kingdom had been committed, that acting under the authority of the King, he was then opening its door for the world to enter in; and hence, that his words are entitled to no ordinary degree of credit. Be it so. We neither wish to detract from the importance of the occasion, nor to question the correctness of the instructions. But none of

these proves that Peter taught on the day of Pentecost, what Campbellites teach now ; nor is it at all probable that the Jews, familiar with the writings of Moses and the Prophets, would thus understand him.

An elliptical, or abbreviated form of speech, was common among the Jews, and abounds in the Scriptures ; so that many phrases and sentences, taken literally, would convey a meaning false and foolish, and never designed by those who used them. Some have supposed this mode of speech to have originated from the fact, that there is no term in the Hebrew language which expresses to *signify* or *denote*. But, be this as it may, the existence of this manner of speaking is unquestionable. Take, for example, the following Scriptures : “The three baskets are three days,” *Gen.* xl. 18. “The ten horns are ten kings,” *Dan.* vii. 24. “The field is the world,” *Matt.* xiii. 38. “The seven candlesticks are the seven churches,” *Rev.* i. 20. “This is my body,” and “this is my blood,” *Matt.* xxvi. 26. 27. Such expressions, very common in both the Old and New Testaments, cannot be understood in a literal sense. The most ordinary reader, seeing the folly of a literal interpretation, will understand the substantive verbs according to the Hebrew idiom : “The three baskets **SIGNIFY** three days.” “The field **REPRESENTS** the world.”

Now the language of Peter on the day of Pentecost, is somewhat in character with the above passages, and is susceptible of a similar



interpretation. Hence we may understand him as saying, "be baptized to represent remission of sins." This interpretation cannot be called unreasonable. The character of the speaker and the hearers, and the nature of the discourse, combine to prove its correctness. He and they were Jews. It was natural for him to adopt this short, elliptical phraseology of his nation; and equally natural for them to hear by the same rule. Moreover, they had been reared in the observance of a religion burdened with rites and ceremonies, some of which, looking back, *represented* events that were past, while others, taking a prospective view, *pointed out* things to come. And these sacrifices, though offered *for* the sins of the people, were not intended to take away sin; but only to *represent* a better sacrifice, and *point out* their dependence on Him for remission. With this knowledge, and under all these circumstances, the multitude listen to Peter's discourse. He is unfolding a new dispensation of the kingdom of God, which, like the former, has its appropriate rites and ordinances. He commands baptism "for the remission of sins." They know the meaning of the sin-offerings of their religion; they understand the emblematical import of its rites and sacrifices; and, above all, they are Hebrews, familiar with the idiom of their nation, and know the true sense and force of its expressions. From all which, it is clear that they received baptism according

to the above exposition to *represent*, or in *reference* to the "remission of sins."

The words of Ananias to Saul, "Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord," are, also, appealed to in support of *water regeneration*; but they afford it no more support than the former, being subject to the same rules of interpretation. Further evidence might be adduced in favor of the construction we have given to these texts. It would be easy to show that it is not forbidden, even by the genius of our own language. But brevity is our object.

Furthermore, whatever may be the force and value of the foregoing interpretation, one thing is certain, that faith is represented in scripture as the great means of justification. And this is plainly *implied* in the text and *expressed* in the context. It is embraced in the words, *in the name of Jesus Christ*; because this expression plainly implies that those who are baptized in or into his name, are *believers* in Christ. The thing is clearly expressed. "Then they that gladly *received* i. e. *believed* his word were baptized." verse 41. And they are spoken of after their baptism as persons who *believed*, verse 44. For though on their repenting and believing, they were according to the tenor of the gospel covenant, entitled to the forgiveness of their sins; they are here called on to repent and submit to the ordinance of baptism in order to receive the same blessing of pardon or justification. And we have seen already that

*faith* was presupposed. Christ, for wise reasons in receiving baptism appointed this solemn rite as a token of their taking up the christian profession in a public manner, and there could not be any sufficient evidence of the truth of their repentance and faith, if this precept of Christ had not been obeyed. But the absurdity of Mr. Campbell's interpretation of this passage, by which faith and true repentance are substantially rejected, will appear in the future treatment of this subject, where justification by faith will be established, and baptism itself rescued from the perverting use to which it is employed in the New Gospel proclaimed first at Bethany.

The views we have given of Acts ii. 38, are believed to be the primary meaning of the text. To adopt the Campbellite assumption, that "*the Scriptures mean what they say, and say what they mean,*" and hence, from the phrase, "for the remission of sins," to argue that Peter taught that pardon could only be had through baptism, would drive us, at once, into the absurd fiction of transubstantiation. That they stand pretty much upon the same ground; that the Romanist has as much authority for the "*real presence,*" as Mr. Campbell has for his notions of baptism, and that the mode of interpretation resorted to for the establishment of the latter, would prove equally formidable in behalf of the former, are all unquestionable. And further, we remark, that Campbell's method of obtaining remission of sins, contradicts

a large portion of the New Testament, and thereby involves christianity itself in inextricable difficulties. This will be shown in the progress of these strictures.

But though the first and principal design of baptism, as the initiatory rite, is to *denote* or *represent* the washing away of sin, “by the Spirit of our God;” yet, this is not its only design. It is, also, a means of grace; and in a subordinate sense, may be administered, literally, “for the remission of sins.” It is in the performance of duty, and not in neglect of it, that we are authorized to expect the favor of God. Hence, we *repent, pray, confess* to God, are *baptized*, and receive the sacrament of the Lord’s supper “for the remission of sins;” and perform every other known duty in reference to the same object. But having obeyed in all these, we are taught not to trust in any one of them, nor in all of them, but to look to a *higher source*, and through *another means*, for the enjoyment of this greatest of present blessings. Indeed, our justification does not depend so much upon Mr. Campbell’s *institution* for the remission of sins, as upon either *repentance* or *prayer*.

Religious truth is of all things the most important; because it involves the concerns of eternity. Campbellism claims to be the truth, “the ancient gospel;” and its devotees, professing to take “the Book” alone for their guide, proclaim baptism, as the only appointed means for obtaining remission of sins. This

doctrine, if *true*, ought to be known; and if *false*, it ought to be exposed, for the salvation of immortal souls is connected with it. We wish to learn its true character, and, therefore, continue the investigation of its claims to the sanctions of Scripture.

Two of the main props of this doctrine were formerly considered, and found not to sustain it. The following are, also, pleaded in its behalf; let us see if they will be more successful: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God," *John* iii. 5. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," *Mark* xvi. 16. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us," *1 Peter* iii. 21. In the first of these quotations a *birth of water* is made necessary in order to our entering "the kingdom of God," and in the last two, a saving virtue seems to be attached to baptism; and hence, Campbellites infer, that "remission of sins" can only be had through immersion. But were we to admit, as assumed in the premises, that baptism is indispensable for the salvation of the soul, and in order to its admission into the kingdom of glory, it certainly could not lead necessarily to the conclusion, that it is the *means* of justification; for as justification, or remission of sins is not the only prerequisite to the enjoyment of heaven, baptism, though necessary for that enjoyment, might be designed for a different purpose. But the premises and the inference are alike inadmissible. To suppose that God has made

the eternal happiness of man so precarious, that it depends upon an ordinance, the performance of which is often inexpedient, and sometimes impossible, is repugnant to Scripture facts, and derogatory to the wisdom and goodness of the Divine Being.

But if salvation can be had without baptism, how are we to understand the above texts? To understand the Savior's meaning, when he connects *water* with the *Spirit* as necessary to entering "the kingdom of God," we must consider that the phrase "kingdom of God" is variously applied in the Scriptures. Campbellites will readily admit that it signifies the church on earth; and St. Paul, when he says, "that flesh and blood cannot inherit the *kingdom of God*," clearly applies it to the church in heaven. And as the apostle tells us in the third chapter of Ephesians, that the church in heaven and that on earth make *but one family*, we are authorized to conclude, that the Savior embraces both of these imports in the phrase, "kingdom of God." This premised, his meaning is obvious. The church needs a badge of discipleship, a visible line, or mark to separate her members from the world. This she has in baptism; and consequently, baptism becomes necessary in order to exhibit to others our faith in Christ, and externally to entitle us to the immunities of the church. This ordinance is, therefore, important, both in its symbolic character, as representing the washing away of sin, and as the initiatory rite, conferring, so far as

man can judge, the privilege of church membership. The church can only receive us through baptism; and hence, this ordinance is necessary to our entering "the kingdom of God," the visible church. But this institution and the privileges it confers, are external; and though necessary for the church on earth, do not regenerate the soul, or prepare it for the kingdom in heaven. 'This is the work of the Holy Spirit, not of water; therefore, in the verses that follow the text, the Savior, dropping all allusion to the water, urges the necessity of being "born of the Spirit," and illustrates the nature of this birth. Thus, "the kingdom," in one sense, implying the church below, and baptism being the visible sign of entrance, we see why the Savior said, "except a man be born of water he cannot enter into the kingdom of God;" and, also, that the necessity for this *birth* would remain, though it were destitute of a spiritual meaning, and in no sense a means of grace.

Keeping these remarks before him, the reader will readily comprehend the other quotations. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Baptism here, cannot be understood as being the means of spiritual regeneration, because the apostle expressly declares, "whosoever *believeth* that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." Now men may certainly believe this before they are baptized; but "whosoever believeth" it "is born of God;" of course, baptism is not the means of this spirit-

ual birth. "He that believeth" "with the *heart* unto righteousness," is justified, and saved from the guilt of sin; but he is not saved externally—he lacks the seal, and neither the church nor the world can recognize him as a member of the kingdom, till he enters by the door of baptism.

These observations, applying with equal force to the often quoted passage from Peter, may be thought to render further remarks unnecessary; but here we wish to be a little more definite. When Peter says, "the like *figure* whereunto baptism doth now save us," he calls baptism a figure or emblem. If it be a "figure," the salvation it brings can only be figurative, not real and literal. The figure of a man cannot perform his work. All that it can do, is to represent his appearance and actions. Consequently, baptism, as a figure, can only "save us" in a figurative, or emblematic sense, by separating us from the world, and pointing out remission of sins by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The baptism of water, then, bears the same relation to the visible church, that the baptism of the Spirit does to the invisible. Without the former, the *sign* and *figure*, no person can be received as a legitimate subject of the visible kingdom; so, also, without the latter, the *thing signified*, no person can belong to the invisible, or spiritual kingdom.

One remark to prevent misunderstanding. In speaking of baptism as necessary to induct us into the church, we do not mean *immersion*,



nor do we exclude it. Our business, at present, is not with the mode. We mean the application of water, by pouring or otherwise, by an authorized minister, in the names of the sacred Trinity.

Another passage relied upon in favor of *water regeneration*, is *Titus* iii. 5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Savior." This text is adduced in proof of Mr. Campbell's assertion, that "regeneration and immersion are two names for the same thing;" and hence the inference that we are saved by immersion. But it is by no means certain that this passage has any allusion to immersion, or to water baptism in any other mode. The latter clause of the quotation, "which he shed on us," teaches that we are saved by something "shed," or *poured out* upon us; and this cannot be immersion. We are aware, however, that Mr. C. would have us confine the relative "which" to the "renewing of the Holy Ghost;" but there is no good reason for this. Indeed, according to his own argument on another text, and for a different purpose the relative "which" must here be confined exclusively to the "washing of regeneration;" and, consequently, the notion of immersion is entirely excluded from the passage. But there is not sufficient ground for confining the relative to either of the pre-

ceding clauses, to the exclusion of the other. It most probably takes for its antecedents, both "the washing" and the "renewal," and hence, the *washing*, by which we are saved, is poured out upon us by the Holy Spirit.

But granting the possibility that there is in this passage an allusion to the application of water in baptism, what is the conclusion? That "baptism is inseparably connected with remission of sins," and that it is another term for regeneration? Certainly not. No man in his senses, whose mind was uninfluenced by the dogmas of the Pope of Rome, could arrive at such a conclusion. The allusion to baptism, if there be any in the text, is found in the word "washing." Let it be conceded that this means baptism. It is called "the washing of regeneration;" therefore, Campbellites would have us believe, that baptism and regeneration mean the same thing. And thus, by a process unknown to all but themselves, the *washing* becomes the *thing washed*; and the act of cleansing a garment is converted into the garment itself! Truly such logic is as superlatively ridiculous and incomprehensible, as the nonsensical jargon of a Mormonite's unknown tongue.

The absurdity of the attempt to prove from this text, the sameness of baptism and regeneration, is too glaring to require a serious refutation; and to take the phrase literally, and suppose that the noun, "regeneration," requires to be washed, would involve an equal

absurdity. Upon the supposition, then, that the passage has any reference to baptism, the only rational conclusion is, that the “washing of regeneration,” implies a *washing in reference to regeneration*; and hence, we arrive at our former definition of the design of baptism; that it *represents* remission of sins “by the renewing of the Holy Spirit, shed on us through Jesus Christ our Savior.”

And now, reader, we have examined the principal texts, upon which the notion of remission of sins, through baptism, depends for its support. The examination has shown that they have very little of the *appearance*, and nothing of the *reality* of that doctrine in them. These Scriptures are its main dependence; they do not sustain it, nor can it be sustained from the Bible. What, then, has given it currency, and kept it alive thus far? Let those who are familiar with the cunning sophistry of A. Campbell, and the bold dogmatism of his coadjutors, answer the question.

Having said that the Scriptures we have noticed, are the principal props of this doctrine, it may be necessary to observe that they are not all. We, it is true, have been able to discern nothing else that seems to bear any resemblance to it, nor do we recollect that Mr. Campbell claims more; but some of his followers have had their mental optics so strengthened by the *light* of this *new gospel*, as to discover proofs of water regeneration everywhere. For instance, one of these knowing ones, having read in the

first chapter of Genesis, that "the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters," finds it an irresistible proof of this doctrine, and proclaims that "the Spirit which moved on the face of the waters in the beginning, has never left them, and that those who rise from 'the womb of waters,' instantaneously inhale that Spirit." And another of the same school tells his hearers, that "*water* was not included in the curse pronounced by the Creator at man's expulsion from paradise ; and this is clear proof that *water* was designed to be the means of our restoration to the image and favor of God." But leaving the reader to determine whether these champions of reform have not got ahead of their Master, we close for the present.

## CHAPTER II.

## FAITH.

Introduction—literal meaning—Baptism, prayer and confession as conditions of justification—justification by faith alone—justifying faith as combining reliance and trust with assent—faith as connected with pardon does not include Baptism or other works—faith of Abraham considered—objections against the doctrine of faith as the condition of justification.

The reader will bear in mind that the condition on which remission of sins is offered to the human family, is still before us. It has been shown that Campbell and his followers proclaim immersion, as this condition; and we have said that they consider it the *only means* of obtaining this blessing. But knowing that he has published ministers who oppose his reformation, as "*licensed slanderers*," and that his satellites are famous for endeavoring to excite public sympathy, by crying out, "misrepresentation and persecution," and above all, wishing to do no man injustice, we pause to explain.

The views of Mr. Campbell, as we understand them, do in reality exclude both repentance and faith (such as the Scriptures require), from having any thing to do with obtaining remission of sins; but we wish our readers to understand that he speaks of something he calls *faith*, and *reformation*, as necessary to ac-

company immersion. And further, we would not be understood to insinuate that he considers immersion as the procuring, or meritorious cause of remission. On this subject, so far as we know, his views are Scriptural. And though we do not think with the Indian, that *two truths* would palliate *one falsehood*, yet amid such a mass of error, we rejoice to find *one truth* to commend. The following quotation will show his sentiments in his own words: "Immersion, nor faith, procures remission. The blood of Jesus, through the favor of God, procures, faith apprehends, and baptism takes hold of the boon of Heaven, or is the means of our enjoyment." With this explanation we resume the subject.

Now, had Mr. Campbell been as *wise* as his followers consider him *great*, and as well acquainted with the *science of salvation*, as he professes to be with classic lore, and with the wisdom of theological schools, *immersion as the means of justification*, would have formed no part of his creed. This we say with confidence, and appeal to the judgment of the intelligent, candid, and unprejudiced reader, who may have perused what was written, in confirmation of what we say. He will at once respond, that the Scriptures, there examined, do not sustain the doctrine. And as these texts, which are mainly relied upon to prove the doctrine in question, do not prove it, consequently, that doctrine falls to the ground, and presents our reformer to the world as another monument of the folly of the attempt to improve the Word of God.

That the literal reading of a few passages of Scripture, seems to favor the doctrine we oppose, has been conceded. But what of this? Shall we adopt the Campbellite's mode of construing Scripture, that "*it means, literally, what it says,*" and hence, conclude the doctrine true? To do this, would drive us to surrender the leading doctrine of christianity, and to admit that the Bible teaches the most absolute nonsense. Our Lord, when handing to his disciples the bread used at the "Last Supper," said, "Take, eat; this is my body." This, according to the rule adopted, *literally means what it literally says*. Then the bread was literally transubstantiated into the real body of the Savior, and eaten by his disciples. And as he had but one body, Judas must have betrayed a phantom, and Pilate crucified an imaginary something, we cannot tell what, but certainly not our Lord himself, not his body, for that had been eaten by the eleven disciples a few hours before. Thus we are driven to the conclusion, that Christ was not crucified; and hence, to hope for "redemption through his blood," is of all *hopes* the most forlorn and hopeless. Again, the Savior said, "Let the dead bury their dead; and this, too, must mean what it says. A neighbor dies; we would be glad to manifest our respect for him, by assisting at his interment; but this *the Book* has forbidden, and, consequently, his burial is consigned to those that had previously died. These are only a few of the dangers and absurdities, involved

in the application of this rule of interpretation.

Perhaps Mr. Campbell may demur to this, and deny that he ever intended to convey the idea that the Word of God is always to be understood, as *literally meaning what it literally says*. But that he originally gave it currency, and that his followers received it as an axiom, and proclaimed it as the only safe rule for the interpretation of Scripture, might be easily proved. It is true, after having witnessed the farcical attitude in which the position, as carried out by his followers, was placing him, he attempted a partial retreat; and hence, when hard pressed, his followers have learned to say, that they only *mean* that the Scripture *means* what its *meaning* says; i. e. in plain English, it *means what it does mean*—a position which no man in his senses will question; but in the nomenclature of this *new gospel* we must give it the following interpretation: *The Scripture means what it says when it seems to favor Campbellism, but when its sayings do not accord with this system, it means what it does not say*. And thus, when preaching baptism “for the remission of sins,” they continue to plead for the literal application of the principle originally assumed—“*the Scripture means what it says*.” Nor is this pertinacious adherence at all surprising, for, to surrender this principle would lead to the abandonment of their favorite notions; or, at least, it would leave the leading feature of their system with



about as much evidence and probability for its support, as have the marvelous adventures of Baron Munchauson.

We notice, in another point of light, the folly, and, also, the danger of the doctrine before us. Upon the literal reading of some three or four isolated texts, and upon an arbitrary construction, and by an unnatural application of a few passages of Scripture, Mr. Campbell has founded a scheme for obtaining remission of sins, which is directly opposed by more than one hundred texts and circumstances recorded in the Bible. This, to say the least of it, is a dangerous precedent, and calculated to countenance almost every absurdity that assumes the garb of christianity. What visionary sectary might not on this ground, attempt to reform the church, and introduce his *notions* as the "ancient gospel?" Such efforts have often been made. Look at the *Socinian*, the *Shaker*, the *Universalist*, the *Mormonite*, and the crazy *Live-for-ever!* Each of these has found a few phrases, or sentences of Scripture, that seem to favor his notions; and setting them up as the only standard of faith and practice, has made proselytes. Nay, more, the attempt to raise a sect, whose members should *eat*, and *drink*, and *talk*, and *laugh*, and *scream*, and *cry like little children*, met with some encouragement; and could plead in its behalf, the letter of Scripture, in the words of the Savior, with as much plausibility as this plea can be urged for *water regeneration*.

On the same ground, we could easily multiply theories, and form systems, repugnant, alike, to the tenor of Scripture, and the opinions of Mr. Campbell. If half a dozen detached portions of the New Testament, justify his theory of *baptism as the condition of remission of sins*, the same amount of testimony will authorize any other theory. And, hence, we might exclude repentance, baptism, and faith from the office of obtaining remission, because a few texts promise this blessing consequent upon *prayer*. Take the following: “*Ask* and ye shall receive;” “How much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that *ask* him;” “Whosoever shall *call* on the name of the Lord, shall be saved.” Again, the Publican prayed, and went down from the temple justified; the thief upon the cross prayed, was forgiven, and taken the same day to paradise; and Peter said to one whom he pronounced “in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity,” “*pray* God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.” These precepts and circumstances, do certainly give as much countenance to that theory which should make *prayer* the means of justification, as can be produced in favor of the *water scheme*.

Another plausible system might be predicated upon *confession*. It is said, “If we *confess* our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”—1 John, i. 9. The apostle here prom-

ises both pardon and sanctification, upon the condition, that we "*confess* our sins;" and this is more than is anywhere said of baptism. With what seeming plausibility might some designing sophist seize upon this passage, and tell the people, that "the clergy of all denominations, are blind leaders of the blind; and that they are still in the fogs of mystic Babylon, 'unjustified, unadopted, and lost to all christian life and enjoyment;' that neither prayer, nor songs, nor repentance, nor faith, nor baptism, is necessary; that God only requires the sinner to *confess his sins*; and having done this, he knows his sins are pardoned, because he knows the Word of God cannot fail." That this scheme would take with some, and that these assertions would gain converts, must be obvious to those who have marked the success of Campbellism, founded on similar principles, and sustained by similar arguments.

But though the doctrine in question, as well as the theories we have supposed, seems to be countenanced by a few texts of Scripture, the Word of God is not inconsistent, the Bible does not contradict itself. In the plan of salvation, man's duties and his enjoyments are inseparably connected. Various duties, and "good works," are required of him; which in their performance, become means of grace; and hence, God's blessing, and the promise of pardon, are in some sense connected with prayer, confession, baptism, and all other acts of obedience. But still, the Scriptures uniformly

teach, that remission of sins, in the sense of accounting a sinner righteous before God, is not to be obtained by "works of righteousness," or by any thing else that he *has done*, or *can do*, as *works*; but that the grace of God is manifested in presenting this blessing, solely upon the condition of *faith*. "It is of *faith*, that it might be by grace."

We believe that the condition of justification, on the part of the sinner, is *faith alone*; because Jesus Christ and his apostles uniformly taught this doctrine; and neither the Campbellite sneer, of "*faith-alone-men*," nor the charge of "*inconsistency*," from the same source, shall deter us from giving heed to their instructions. In a late number of the *Millennial Harbinger*, those who preach with St. Paul, "that a man is justified by *faith*, without the deeds of the law," are charged by Mr. Campbell, and one of his *pets*, with *contradicting themselves, and not believing what they preach*. And why? Because they believe that repentance must accompany *faith*. But is there any inconsistency in this? If so, what an inconsistent man is Mr. Alexander Campbell, who has published to the world that "immersion **ALONE** is the act of turning to God;" and yet declares that *faith* and *reformation* must precede that act. Verily, "those that live in glass houses should not throw stones."

When the Philippian jailor inquired, "What must I do to be saved?" the apostle answered, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou*

shalt be saved, and thy house." When Peter preached to Cornelius, and them that were with him, he declared, that to Jesus Christ "gave all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever *believeth* in him shall receive remission of sins;" and afterwards, when speaking of this visit to the Gentiles, and pleading their cause before the church at Jerusalem, he said, that God had received them upon the same condition he had received the Jews, "purifying their hearts *by faith*." In these texts, *salvation*, *remission of sins*, and *purification of heart*, are offered upon the condition of *belief*, and declared to be "*by faith*," and they, if the Scriptures said nothing more on the subject, would serve as a set-off against the plan of Mr. Campbell, and afford some countenance to the opinion, that "*faith alone*" is the condition of salvation from sin. But the *terms of pardon* are too important to guilty man, to be involved in any uncertainty; and hence, they are so clearly stated, and so frequently repeated in the New Testament, as to exclude all possibility of doubt. Pardon of sin, is therein positively declared to be "*by faith*," "*through faith*," and "*of faith*;" and salvation from sin, in its various acceptations, is, in more than three hundred passages, represented as depending upon the condition of *faith*, without any allusion to baptism, or to any other act of obedience. From which it is clear, that *faith*, and not *works* of any kind or quality, is taught by our Lord and his apostles, as the condition of

justification, or remission of sins; and hence, the scheme which makes baptism that condition, or any part of it, did not originate from the Bible.

God's plan of justifying the ungodly, as revealed in his Word, we believe to be through *faith alone*, and feel confident of our ability to prove this to the satisfaction of the intelligent, unprejudiced reader; but before we proceed further, it may be proper to notice an attempted evasion. It is said that *baptism cannot invalidate faith; and, therefore, that the addition of baptism to faith as a prerequisite for forgiveness, can do no harm, though that prerequisite were faith alone.* The fact that Mr. Campbell has given this position currency, through the "Millennial Harbinger," seems to render some notice of it necessary, though its absurdity must be obvious to the reader. That the reward may be "reckoned of grace," and not "of debt," God has promised remission of sins "to him that worketh not, but *believeth*;" but *man*, considering the arrangement of Jehovah defective, attempts to improve the plan by adding *works* to faith, and tells the world, that "it is not *faith*, but *going down into the water*, that obtains remission of sins;" and then consoles himself by the reflection, that if the condition should prove to be *faith alone*, the addition of baptism must be harmless, inasmuch as *faith* is retained as a part of the condition. But the most ordinary reader will see the danger of making that a *part only*, which God had

made the *whole*; and, also, that the uniting of works with faith as the condition of pardon, entirely changes the ground of the sinner's acceptance with God. St. Paul argued that the pardon of sin upon the condition of faith alone, tended to magnify the grace of God, and to exclude boasting from the creature; but if baptism is that which obtains the blessing, it is no longer of grace, but of debt, and the creature has whereof to boast, and may say, "Come hither all ye that fear the Lord, and I will tell you what I have done for my soul. I have been down into the water—I have washed away my sins—I am happy, because I have done all this." It is thus seen, that Mr. Campbell's scheme neutralizes the grace of God in the pardon of sin, if it does not entirely exclude it, and offers remission upon principles contrary to the teachings of the New Testament. But further, this scheme, while it talks much about faith, comes short of the faith required in the gospel. And as this is a source of error, and of manifest danger to those who embrace the system, before we proceed to prove that justification is *by faith*, we shall endeavor to ascertain the nature of that faith, which the Scriptures connect with justification.

Mr. Campbell, we believe, admits of no higher degree of faith, than the *assent* of the mind, produced by the force of evidence. The ground assumed by his followers, is, "that man is not so depraved as to require any divine agency to induce, or to enable him to *believe* the gospel;

that *faith* and *belief*, strictly speaking, mean the same thing, and are entirely predicated upon evidence ; and that the faith required in order to salvation is only a full persuasion of the truth of the gospel facts." From which it is clear, that a Campbellite's faith is only historic, and nothing more than the assent of the mind to the truth of any fact, sustained by credible testimony. This view of faith is what we had allusion to in a former number, when we said, that Mr. Campbell rejects that faith which the Scriptures require. And we are still of the same opinion ; for though the Scriptures do require a belief of the facts therein contained, this is not all they require, nor is this all that *faith* in its fullest sense implies.

Faith is presented in Scripture under two leading views. The first embraces the *assent* of the mind ; the second, the *confidence, reliance, and trust*, of the will and the affections. The former may exist without the latter (and here is where Campbellites make shipwreck of their faith,) but the latter cannot exist without the former. That all faith is not the same, is clearly taught in the Scriptures. The Savior commends the greatness of the faith of some, while he condemns the "little faith" of others. A dead, inoperative faith is mentioned by St. James ; and faith in the sense of intellectual assent to truth, is allowed to be possessed even by devils. But neither this "little faith," nor this "dead faith," can be what the Scriptures require in order to salvation ; for those who possess it are



condemned. It is, therefore, certain, that the faith of the christian includes more than a belief of the general truths of revelation. It combines with the belief of those truths, a *confidence* in, and a *reliance* upon the merits of Christ alone. In other words, it unites assent with reliance, belief with trust. Of Christ it was said, "in his name shall the Gentiles *trust*." He is proclaimed as the only true sacrifice for sin, and both Jews and Gentiles are required to renounce their own righteousness, and *confide* solely in his death and mediation. He is set forth as a propitiation, "through faith in his blood;" which faith can neither mean mere assent to the historical fact that his blood was shed upon Calvary; nor a mere belief of the doctrine that his blood has an atoning virtue; but as he has made "a sin offering for us," "faith in his blood," implies a confident reliance on him for pardon. A further illustration of this view of faith is seen in the address of our Lord to his disciples upon the withering away of the fig tree. "Have faith in God; for verily I say unto you, that whosoever shall say unto this mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and shall not *doubt in his heart*, but shall believe [trust] that these things which he saith shall come to pass, he shall have whatsoever he saith." Now, when he exhorted his disciples to "have faith in God," he certainly did not mean to question their belief of the existence of God. Thus faith in this sense was not doubted. But he

exhorted them to exercise a higher degree of faith, i. e., a confidence, or trust in the promises of God, when called by him to contend with mountainous difficulties. Under the idea of *confidence*, St. Paul, also, refers to faith, when he says, *Heb. x. 35*: "Cast not away, therefore, your *confidence*, which hath great recompense of reward;" for he adds in the 38th verse, "Now the just shall live by *faith*; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Here it is obvious, that the apostle contrasts, *living by faith*, with *drawing back* and *casting confidence away*; and hence, *confidence* and *faith*, are used as synonymous terms.

It is thus clearly seen, that that faith which the Scriptures make the condition of justification, combines with the belief of truth, a trust in, a reliance upon, and a confident taking hold of the merits of Christ's death as a sacrifice for our sins. Did faith in the former sense, necessarily include the latter, the Campbellite notion concerning faith, would be harmless. But this it does not. The former may exist, without one particle of the latter. Twenty-five years ago, I believed that there was such a man as Napoleon Bonaparte, whose arms seemed invincible, and who bid fair to overturn the dynasties of Europe; but I did not admire his character, had no *confidence* in his pretensions, and never desired to *trust* him for any thing. This may illustrate the point before us: Wicked men read the Bible, and hear it expounded,

till they become convinced of its truth, give the full assent of their minds to the facts it develops, and have all the faith that a Campbellite requires ; but their hearts being at enmity with God, they do not *confide or trust* in the gift of his Son, for salvation ; and hence, they remain unrenewed in their spirit and conduct.

The most unlettered christian will see the difference between the faith of assent, and that of reliance, or trust, and that true and saving faith must include both. Indeed, to confide or trust in Christ, constitutes the principal essence of faith, and is the condition of justification. "But," to use the words of Watson, "this is not a blind and superstitious trust in the sacrifice of Christ, like that of the heathen in their sacrifices ; nor the presumptuous trust of wicked and impenitent men, who depend on Christ to save them in their sins ; but such a trust as is exercised according to the authority and direction of the Word of God ; so that *to know* the gospel in its leading principles, and to have a cordial *belief* in it, is necessary to that more specific act of faith which is called *reliance*, or in systematic language, *fiducial assent*." "With the *heart* man believeth unto righteousness."

Having defined and illustrated the nature of that faith, which the Scriptures connect with salvation, and found it to combine *reliance* and *trust*, with *assent*, we proceed to show that this is that qualifying condition to which the promise of God annexes justification.

It will not be necessary to prove, that justification, pardon and remission of sins, forgiveness of sins, the non-imputation of sin, and the imputation of righteousness, are different New Testament terms and phrases of the same import. Believing that our opponents will concede this, we shall only adduce one quotation. St. Paul clearly uses justification and forgiveness as synonymous terms, when he says, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man is preached unto you the *forgiveness* of sins: and by him all that believe are *justified* from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." — *Acts*, xiii. 38, 39. In this passage, to be forgiven, and to be justified, are represented as the same state, and as implying the same act of divine mercy by which sin is remitted, and the sinner accounted righteous before God. Keeping this in mind, the reader will be prepared to attend us, while we demonstrate that *faith*, and not *baptism*, is the condition upon which the Scriptures offer the pardon of sin.

That justification by faith alone was the grand doctrine of the Reformation, brought forth from the Scriptures by Luther, Melancthon, and others, and by them successfully urged against the corruptions of the church of Rome, will not be questioned. And that this doctrine has been a leading feature in the creeds of most of the reformed churches, Arminian as well as Calvinistic, from that time to the present, is also undeniable. It is not pretended

that these facts prove the truth of this doctrine, but they certainly have an important bearing, and are entitled to some deference. That christians of different parties and opinions, under the influence of conflicting interests, and, too frequently, divided by sectarian prejudices, should, for several hundred years, unite in receiving and defending justification by faith alone, is strong presumptive evidence of its truth. We cannot easily account for the unanimity of sentiment upon this point, among Protestant christians, but upon the ground that the doctrine is taught in the Scriptures. And certainly the attempt to condemn the Protestant christian world, and to overturn the principles of the Reformation from Popery, by the introduction of *works*, as the condition of justification, comes in "a questionable shape," from a Protestant Reformer.

But we neither rely upon the above facts, nor upon any other human authority to prove the point in issue. The Word of God is our only dependence. To the Scriptures we turn; and if justification by faith, without works, be not therein taught and defended, we shall abandon it, and take shelter with the Campbellites, or the Catholics. But if there be any thing clearly taught by our Lord and his apostles, it is the doctrine for which we contend. In the above quotation from Acts xiii. St. Paul declares "all that *believe* are justified." This language is pointed and clear, and as obviously opposed to the doctrine of Mr. Campbell, as day to night.

According to his teachings, men must believe before they are baptized, but their belief does not justify, nor can they be pardoned until they go down into the water; but the apostle teaches a different doctrine, and without any allusion to baptism, plainly declares, that “all that believe are justified.”

The Saviour in person, on various occasions, inculcated this important truth. In his conversation with Nicodemus he uses the following language: “As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; that whosoever *believeth* in him should not perish, but have eternal life.” Though pardon of sin is not here mentioned, it is evidently implied; for “eternal life” can only be enjoyed by them whose sins are forgiven. But eternal life is promised in this text to those that *believe*; therefore, the Saviour clearly teaches remission and salvation, upon the condition of faith alone. That this is the doctrine of the text, will be obvious to those who consider the circumstance adverted to by way of illustration. When the Israelitish camp in the wilderness was infested by poisonous serpents, Moses lifted up the brazen serpent, as an antidote to the poison. But they that were bitten, were not required to touch the brazen serpent, nor to look upon it, and then to plunge themselves in the water, as the condition of their restoration. They were only required *to look*. And although the poison was rapidly approaching the citadel of life, and its victim

was at the point of death, so soon as he opened his eyes and looked upon the brazen serpent he was healed. Now this *look* by the natural eye, upon the serpent that Moses lifted up, forcibly illustrates that look by the eye of faith, upon a crucified Savior, which is required of the sinner. And as in the former case, life was promised, solely, upon the condition that they should look upon the serpent of brass, so, also, in the latter, remission of sins and eternal life, are offered upon the condition of faith alone.

That this is the doctrine taught by the express letter of Scripture, no one can deny ; and so numerous are the passages that bear upon this point, that to give them to the reader, would subject us to the necessity of transcribing a considerable part of the New Testament. Take the following: “ Abraham *believed* God and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” —Rom. iv. 3. “ To him that worketh not, but *believeth* on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness” —verse 5. “ We say that *faith* was reckoned to him for righteousness” —verse 9. “ Now it was not written for his sake alone, that *it* was imputed to him ; but for us to whom *it* shall be imputed, if we *believe* in him who raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead” —verse 23, 24. In these quotations, taken promiscuously from one chapter, faith is seven times declared to be the condition upon which man receives remission of sins and is accounted righteous.

In these texts it should be noted, that "*faith*" is plainly said to be "imputed for righteousness;" an expression which is nowhere used of baptism, or of any other kind of works; and in this we see the excellency of faith, and the propriety of making it the condition of pardon.

The tenor of Scripture, where justification is the theme, accords with the above passages. Faith is frequently said to be accounted to the sinner for righteousness, and his justification is often declared to be "by faith," "through faith," and "of faith." Now if baptism occupied the place of faith in these expressions, or was connected with it, there would be no difficulty in making it the condition of remission of sins. But the case is different; there is no allusion to baptism, or to any other work, either moral, ceremonial, or evangelical; and the only satisfactory reason that can be given for the apostle's failure to connect baptism with faith as the condition of pardon, is, that it was not designed to form any part of that condition.

Justification by faith, is so frequently and positively taught in the unequivocal language of the New Testament, that Mr. Campbell, and his adherents, have found it necessary to evade the force of that language, by departing from what the apostles *say*, and supplying what they suppose them to *mean*; and hence, we are told that "being justified by faith," means, "*by an act of faith*, or a believing immersion in the Lord Jesus Christ." To say nothing of the



inconsistency of this gloss as coming from those who profess to bow to the authority of Scripture, and to believe that it means what it says, its entire lack of evidence, and its palpable absurdity, furnish its own refutation.

That the New Testament writers, by the word "faith," mean *faith*, and not *works*, is obvious: 1. From the plain distinction which they draw between them, when they tell us, that "faith works by love," "is shown forth by our works," and exhort us "to add to our faith, virtue; to virtue, knowledge; and, 2. Because it is unreasonable to suppose that Christ and his apostles would use a word which had a known and fixed import, and mean by this word a thing directly the reverse of itself, which they must have done if they intended to include *baptism* in the term *faith*. When the apostles preached justification by faith, we cannot by any reasonable construction, understand them to mean any thing more than belief and trust; and hence faith is clearly set forth as the sole condition of remission of sins.

But let us examine this Campbellite gloss a little further. It tells us, that the apostles, by *faith*, intend a "believing immersion," an act springing from faith. If so, it will do no violence to the Scriptures to omit the word "faith," and to supply its place by that which it is said to mean. Then let us try a few texts. Our Lord says, "O woman, great is thy faith" (great is thy *believing immersion*.) St. Paul says, "With the heart man believeth unto righteous-

ness" (with the heart man is *immersed* unto righteousness.) Again, "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast" (by grace are ye saved through a *believing immersion in the Lord Jesus Christ*; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast.) In this last quoted text, the apostle tells us that salvation is the gift of God, through faith, and that works, as a condition, are excluded, so that boasting might be excluded from the sinner; but Campbell's interpretation declares that we are saved by works, for baptism is works in the proper sense of that word, and it cannot be any thing but works. Hence, the apostle is made to say in the same sentence, that we are saved by works, and that we are not saved by works. It is thus shown, that man, to support an unscriptural system, would make an inspired apostle contradict himself, and convert the plain truths and sober reasonings of the Word of God, into absurdity and nonsense.

The foregoing remarks were offered to show the absurdity of the idea that faith, when connected with remission of sins in the New Testament, includes baptism, or other works of obedience. This point claims a few additional remarks.

In every discourse of St. Paul, when treating on the method of justification, faith and works so far from being united, are plainly opposed to each other. In the 3d and 4th chapters of

Romans, he treats on this subject professedly, states it clearly, reasons cogently, and concludes emphatically, "That a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." Now Campbellites tell us that "the law" here means the Jewish ritual, and we admit that the apostle does exclude this law from the office of justifying; but he certainly, in the above expression, had some other law in view. He proceeds directly to ask the following question: "Do we make void the law through faith? God forbid; yea, we establish the law." All will admit that the apostle does, "through faith," "make void" the ceremonial law. But he is now speaking of a law which he does not make void, of course this cannot be the rites of the Mosaic economy. The conclusion is, therefore, unavoidable, that that law which faith does not make void, is the law of moral and evangelical works; and as St. Paul argues that a man is justified without the deeds of this law, it follows that works do not enter into the condition of justification.

Indeed, the apostle's argument necessarily excludes from the office of justifying, works of evangelical obedience, as well as works of the ceremonial law. The scope of his reasoning is against works, not for their kind or quality, or the dispensation under which they originated, but on account of their nature as works. He is laboring to extol the grace and goodness of God, by showing that the pardon of our sins is not obtained by our acts of obedience to law,

but that it is of his unmerited favor. Hence he says, "Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man unto whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works, saying, blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered"—*Rom. iv. 4—7*. Now we cannot suppose the apostle here, by "him that worketh," to mean the Jew only, seeking justification by the deeds of the ceremonial law, because, 1. He speaks of "works," without any restricting adjunct or inference; and if rites and ceremonies under the Jewish economy are *works*, rites and ceremonies under the christian economy are also *works*; and 2. This supposition would destroy his argument; for, coming down to the 16th verse, he says, "Therefore it is of *faith* that it might be by *grace*." The argument amounts to this: Pardon of sin is of the grace of God alone, but a condition is required of the sinner; if that condition were *works* of obedience to any law, the "reward would be reckoned of debt," for having performed the work he might claim the reward as his right, as having earned it; and hence, that the sinner might have nothing "whereof to glory" in himself, but be constrained to "glory in the Lord," his sins are remitted upon the condition of faith "without works."

If this is not a necessary inference from St. Paul's reasonings, and if he did not mean, thereby, to reject baptism and all other works, as the means of obtaining pardon, and place our justification upon the condition of faith alone, it will be difficult to show that he came to any conclusion.

We now proceed to the consideration of our main argument in defence of justification by faith. That facts are stubborn arguments, though a trite saying, is unquestionably true. We give the fact of Abraham's justification in proof of the doctrine for which we contend, and do not fear to risk the issue upon his case alone. It is true we are under no necessity to do this; for independent of his case, the doctrine stands as conspicuous in the Scriptures, as the unclouded sun in the firmament of heaven, but the manner of his justification is so directly in point, that those who will not be, thereby, convinced of the fallacy of trusting in baptism, would scarcely be convinced "though one rose from the dead" for their benefit.

In presenting the case of Abraham, we shall prove, 1. That his justification is the pattern of the justification of sinful men in all ages; and, 2. That he was justified by faith alone. If we succeed in establishing these points, our "negative" will be sustained, and baptism, as the means of obtaining remission of sins, will be proved to be an unscriptural assumption.

1. That the mode in which Abraham was justified, points out the method which God has

revealed for the forgiveness of sin, is clearly set forth in two of St. Paul's epistles. In that to the Galatians we have the following language : " Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the Scriptures, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." Here christians are said to be " blessed with faithful Abraham," and to be his " seed" and his " children ;" from which it is clear that they become " heirs" by walking in his footsteps.

But this point is settled beyond controversy in the 4th chapter of Romans, which the reader is requested to examine for himself. It will be seen that the apostle in this part of the epistle, is laboring to show God's method of justifying the ungodly ; and for this purpose he refers to the case of Abraham by way of proof and illustration. But this case would be entirely irrelevant, and prove nothing, unless Abraham's justification be a pattern of the justification of his children. And further, the apostle here says, that Abraham " received the sign of circumcision ; a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised : that he might be the father of all them that believe—who also *walked in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham.*" Rom. iv. 11,

12. In this passage Abraham is declared to be “the father of all that believe,” and they are said *to walk in the steps of his faith*. From which it follows that the manner in which he was justified, is the manner in which all his children are justified. If he were justified by faith and works, so are they ; but if the condition of his justification was “faith without works,” then the condition of their justification is the same.

2. It only remains for us to ascertain how Abraham was justified, and then the question will be settled. On this, as on all other points, we appeal “to the law and testimony,” to the teachings of the Scriptures, and the recorded facts of the case, which, in the present instance, we believe to be so clear and decisive as to bid defiance, alike, to sophistry and scepticism.—The following Scriptures are in point : “If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory ; but not before God. For what saith the Scriptures ? Abraham believed God and it [his faith] was counted unto him for righteousness”—Rom. iv, 2, 3. “We say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned, when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision ? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision”—(verse 9, 10). “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness”—Gal. iii, 6. In making these assertions St. Paul had the authority of Moses, who, in giving an account of this transaction, adds, “and

he believed in the Lord, and he counted it to him for righteousness"—Gen. xv, 6. The quotations might be multiplied, but these are decisive. To add more would seem like trifling with the reader.

Now, though the Scriptures cannot be always understood according to their literal reading, yet they are generally to be received in this sense ; nor can we with safety depart from it, unless the context presents the language as figurative and metaphorical, or a different construction be required in order that the passage may harmonize with the general voice, and obvious import of Scripture. But certainly there is nothing in Abraham's case or in the above quotations, to justify the idea that the language is used figuratively or metonymically ; nor does the harmony of Scripture require that we should understand the term "faith" in these passages, otherwise than in its proper and literal sense. On the contrary, to understand it in any other sense, would imply a manifest contradiction in the Scriptures, and involve christianity in difficulties from which the most subtil ingenuity could not extricate it. But these Scriptures declare explicitly, that Abraham's faith "was counted," "imputed" and "reckoned to him for righteousness," and that he was justified by faith "without works." It is therefore certain, that *faith* was the sole condition of his pardon.

This conclusion is confirmed and its correctness established by the circumstances connected



with his justification, to which we now appeal. Moses in the 15th chapter of Genesis, informs us, that Abraham was justified when he believed the promise of God, that he should have a son in his old age; St. Paul refers to the same fact, and in the following quotation, testifies to its truth. Abraham “against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, ‘So shall thy seed be.’ And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah’s womb: he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform. And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness”—*Rom. iv. 18–22*. If then the testimony of two inspired writers is to be credited, it is clear, that Abraham was justified before Isaac was born, and at the time he believed the promise of God relative to his birth. And this circumstance entirely excludes the notion that any act of obedience in the shape of works, was connected with his justification. No such act was required; neither offering, nor ceremony, was at that time demanded. God had promised him a son in his old age; the probabilities of nature were entirely against the fulfillment of the promise, but considering the ability and fidelity of Him who had promised, he *believed, trusted and confided* in his word; and

by this act of faith, which at the time was unaccompanied by works of any kind or quality, he was justified.

We repeat, that the circumstances of the case utterly forbid the idea that works of obedience had any thing to do with Abraham's justification. "It was of faith, that it might be by grace." God demanded no works at his hands, either as a part or the whole of the condition of pardon, and, consequently, his performances, whatever they might have been, could not have been acts of obedience. But, indeed, he attempted nothing of the kind; or if he did, the Scriptures tell us nothing about it. But if our opponents still insist, that some act of obedience must have accompanied his faith or he could not have been justified, we inquire, what was that act? Not baptism, for it at that time had no existence as a religious ordinance; not circumcision, for Abraham was not circumcised till several years after his justification, nor was it the *offering* of Isaac, for he was not then born. But the inquiry is vain, and the search fruitless. The Scriptures give no information of any act of obedience in Abraham's case, when he believed God concerning the promised seed, and was justified; the circumstances, as recorded, entirely exclude the idea of works, and the Scriptures declare that he was justified "by faith, without works."

From all which we consider our points as proved, our negative sustained, and justification by faith alone, unquestionably established. And

planting ourself on these facts and arguments, clad with the panoply of gospel truth, we shall neither regard the puny missiles of *sneers* and sarcasms, nor fear the arguments of more sensible and manly opponents.

We have now presented the substance of what we designed in proof of justification by faith. Much more might be adduced, but it is not considered necessary. The case of Abraham is decisive. It will scarcely be questioned, that his justification is given by the apostle as the pattern of the justification of sinners in all ages; of course our pardon is obtained on the same qualifying principle that his was. If this is not St. Paul's meaning, he means nothing, and proves nothing, by his reference to the patriarch. But the Scriptures clearly teach that "faith without works, was accounted to him for righteousness," and the circumstances and time of his justification render it morally impossible for works of obedience to have formed any part of the condition of his pardon. It is therefore certain, that all who "walk in the steps of the faith of Abraham," and become his children, receive remission of sins as he did, by faith alone; that man is not, and never was in any age, justified in the sense of being pardoned and accounted righteous, by works of any kind, whether moral, ceremonial, or evangelical; and that baptism as the means of pardon, is man's invention, unauthorized and unsanctioned by the Oracles of truth.

We proceed now to notice some objections

against the doctrine of *faith*, as the condition of justification. The positions we have established in the case of Abraham, and the doctrine deduced therefrom, are objected to,

I. Because St. James tells us, that Abraham was "justified by works when he offered Isaac his son upon the altar."

On this subject we have witnessed the display of much zeal in the pulpit, and heard many "great swelling words" from the teachers of Campbellism, in laboring to reconcile St. Paul's account of Abraham's justification to the incidental remark of St. James. And believing them sincere, we have often lamented the ignorance they manifested on this important subject. Taking it for granted, that *justification* is always to be understood in the same sense, they conclude the two apostles to treat of the same thing; but a better knowledge of the Bible would show them the propriety of using the term under four different views, and they would at once discover that these apostles do not speak of justification in the same sense.

In meeting the above objection, we shall avail ourself, in part, of the arguments of Mr. Watson in his "Institutes," using our own language, or abbreviating his, as may seem expedient; and unless we are much too sanguine, it will be made to appear, that Campbellites, on this subject, have as greatly mistaken St. James as they have mistaken St. Paul. Let it be remembered, that they, supposing the two

apostles to speak of justification in the same sense, and that St. James tells the whole truth, and St. Paul only a part, endeavor to reconcile the latter to the former.

We observe then, 1. That the attempt to interpret St. Paul by St. James involves a manifest absurdity. The former treats professedly, and in a set discourse, on the subject in question, the justification of sinful man before God ; but the latter, if he could be allowed to treat on that subject with the same design, does it but incidentally. The former enters into the subject by copious argument, the latter barely touches it, and passes on. From which it is evident, that the whole truth must first be sought for, and can only be expected, in the writer who enters professedly and fully into the inquiry. The absurdity of a contrary course, will be obvious to every reader.

But, 2. The two apostles do not engage in the same argument, because they are not addressing themselves to persons in the same circumstances. St. Paul, addressing the unbelieving Jews, who sought justification by obedience to the moral and ceremonial law, proves, that neither Jew nor Gentile can be justified by works of obedience to any law, and that therefore justification, in the sense of pardon, must be by faith alone. But St. James, addressing such as professed christianity, but had imbibed dangerous views of the nature of faith, supposing that faith, in the sense of opinion or mere belief of doctrine, would save them,

while they remained destitute of a real change of heart, and holiness of life, pleads for the renovation of man's nature, and evangelical obedience, as the necessary fruits of real or living faith. St. Paul proves, that works, in whole or in part, would not *justify*; St. James proves, that a dead faith, the mere faith of assent, would not *save*.

3. St. Paul and St. James do not use the term justification in the same sense. It was shown in a former number, that St. Paul uses it to express the pardon of sin. But, that St. James does not speak of this kind of justification is evident from his reference to the case of Abraham, in which we are told that the justification of which he speaks took place at the time that Isaac was offered upon the altar. He cannot mean that Abraham was then justified in the sense of being pardoned, for St. Paul, on the authority of Moses, fixes that event many years previously, even before Isaac was born, at the time that he believed God relative to the promised seed, and his faith was imputed for righteousness. It is obvious then, that the justification of Abraham, mentioned by St. James, does not mean the forgiveness of his sins, and that he uses the term in a different sense to St. Paul. And yet, Campbellites will understand them as using the term in the same sense, and therefore assert that Abraham was not forgiven until he had offered his son upon the altar; by which, instead of reconciling the two apostles, they plainly declare that the as-

sertions of Moses and St. Paul are not true.—Verily, this is *reformation* with a vengeance!

4. The only sense in which St. James can take the term justification, when he says that Abraham was “justified by works, when he had offered Isaac,” is, that his works manifested or proved that he was justified, proved that he was really justified by faith, or, in other words, that the faith by which he was justified was not dead and inoperative, but living and active. If this is not his meaning—if he intends to say that Abraham was then justified in the sense of being pardoned, he directly contradicts St. Paul, who places that event twenty-five years before the offering of Isaac. But, so far is St. James from contradicting St. Paul’s account of the time and manner of Abraham’s justification, that he clearly admits and confirms it, by quoting the passage from Genesis, in which this is said to have taken place years before; and he makes use of his works when he obeyed God in offering his son upon the altar, to prove that the faith, by which he was originally justified, was not *dead*, but living and obedient. “Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was his faith made perfect, and the Scripture *was fulfilled*, which saith, ‘Abraham believed God’ (in a transaction twenty-five years previous), ‘and it was imputed to him for righteousness,’ and he was called the friend of God”—James ii, 22, 23. Observe here, that St. James quotes the same passage, Gen. xv, 6, which St.

Paul had quoted, and adds, “and the Scripture was fulfilled.”—The Scripture here said to be *fulfilled*, is the above passage from Genesis, quoted by St. Paul, to prove that Abraham was justified, alone, by the imputation of faith for righteousness. And this Scripture, says St. James, “was fulfilled,” when Isaac was offered upon the altar. But how was it fulfilled? Not in the sense of being accomplished, for the passage is neither typical nor prophetic, but the simple narrative of a fact which transpired twenty-five years before the fulfillment spoken of. The only sense then in which the term “fulfill” can be taken in this passage, is, that of *illustration* and *establishment*.—When Abraham obeyed God by offering his son upon the altar, he *illustrated* and *confirmed* the truth of the Scripture which declared him to have been justified by faith many years prior to this act of obedience, and proved that the faith by which he was pardoned was living and operative. It is thus clearly seen, that St. James confirms St. Paul’s position, that Abraham was pardoned by faith “without works,” and that the justification which he mentions, is not the pardon of sin, but the manifestation or proof of being in a justified state.

5. And as St. James does not use the term justification to express the forgiveness of sin, when he speaks of the justification of Abraham by works, it follows, that he cannot use it in this sense in the general conclusion: “ye see, then, how that by works a man is justified,



and not by faith only." The ground on which he rests this general inference is the *declarative justification* of Abraham, which resulted from his act of obedience in the case of Isaac; the justification of which he speaks in the conclusion of the argument, must, therefore, be taken in the same sense. He is not speaking of the act of being justified, or the means of obtaining pardon; but of being proved to be in a manifest and Scripturally approved state of justification. His argument is, that "by works" a man is shown to be in a justified *state*; that his profession of being in the Divine favor is justified and confirmed by his works, and not only by the faith of intellectual assent which is dead, and unproductive of good works."

It is now seen, that the two apostles perfectly agree, in teaching justification, in the sense of pardon by *faith alone*; and justification, in the sense of proof and confirmation, by *works* of obedient faith. St. James declares that no man can be saved by mere faith. But that he does not mean the same kind and degree of faith, to which St. Paul attributes a saving efficacy, his argument sufficiently proves. He speaks of a faith which is "alone" and "dead," St. Paul of the faith which is never alone, though it alone justifieth; the faith of an humbled penitent, who not only yields speculative assent to the gospel facts, but flies with confidence to the atonement of Christ, for pardon of sin and deliverance from it; the faith, in short, which is the fruit of the Spirit, and which in after life,

manifests itself by yielding "the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

There is then no foundation for the objection; the epistle of St. James gives no countenance to the propagators of the doctrine of remission of sins through baptism, but confirms and establishes St. Paul's theory of "faith without works."

II. A second objection is, that justification "without works," is unfavorable to morality, and leads to Antinomianism.

This objection is as old as the days of St. Paul. When he preached forgiveness of sins "by grace," "through faith," "without works," the Pharisaic Jew objected to the doctrine on the ground that it gave a license to "continue in sin that grace might abound;" and the Campbellite now, objects to it on the same ground. As the answer has, in part, been already given, we hope to dismiss the objection with a few brief remarks.

The doctrine of justification by faith alone, cannot lead to licentiousness, because the faith by which we are justified, is *not alone* in the heart that exercises it. In receiving Christ, as our old divines say, "faith is *sola*, yet not *solitaria*." Faith though it is the sole condition of pardon, necessarily includes a "godly sorrow" for sin. It is not the trust of a careless impenitent sinner, but the trust of one who sees his sinfulness, and feels his danger; of one who being "slain" by the convincing power of the word and spirit of God, comes to him humbly

lamenting his past disobedience, and confidently relying upon the sacrifice and mediation of Christ for pardon. This being the state of mind in which justifying faith is exercised; and as justification does not terminate our probation and unconditionally guaranty the enjoyment of eternal life, but knowing that we can only retain our justified state, by continuing the exercise of that faith which "works by love" and produces the fruits of holy obedience, it follows, that faith, as the sole condition of justification, furnishes not the shadow of a pretext for continuing in sin. On the contrary, as it is by faith alone that we apprehend and lay hold of the atonement of Christ for pardon of sin, and deliverance from it, this doctrine becomes exclusively the doctrine of holiness and good works.

III. But here a charge of "inconsistency" is presented, as a third objection. "If repentance," says the Campbellite, "goes before pardon, it must be a part of the condition, and consequently it cannot be by faith alone."

Adverting to this objection formerly we promised, in noticing it, to exonerate the Bible method of justification from this charge of "inconsistency." This pledge shall now be redeemed.

Repentance necessarily precedes justification—so, also, does prayer. The humble penitent ought to pray, and will pray. Mr. Campbell, it is true, would deprive him of this privilege, but the Scriptures grant it to him, and make

it his duty. Repentance and prayer, then, necessarily go before pardon; but they are not necessary, as forming a part of the condition on which God remits sin, but as preparatory to the exercise of that condition. No man can believe "with the *heart* unto righteousness," until he has repented and prayed. To use figurative language, repentance, though not the condition of justification, is the road the sinner must travel in order to arrive at that condition. The following supposed case, will clearly illustrate our meaning. The congress of the United States pass a law requiring every revolutionary soldier to sign his name, or make his mark on the pension list, in the city of Washington as the condition on which he shall receive his pension. Yonder is a veteran of '76, who resides 500 miles from said city, which he must travel before he can perform the condition. He starts and arrives at the seat of government, but this does not entitle him to the pension, nor is it any part of the terms on which he is to receive it. His pension depends on his signature alone. Thus the journey, though necessary to bring him to the point where he can fulfill the required condition of the law, does not itself constitute any part of that requirement.

Now apply this to the case before us, and the objection will disappear. God requires faith, only, as the condition of pardon. But the sinner is so entirely alienated, and has wandered so far astray, that he cannot comply

with this requirement until he return by the road of repentance. But though he repent till his eyes weep blood, it does not obtain his pardon. It only brings him to that state of mind, and to that sense of his helpless condition, which prepares him for the exercise of that trust in, and reliance upon the merits of a crucified Savior, which justifying faith implies. No man is forgiven until he believes "with the heart;" and no man who thus believes, can remain unforgiven. Hence, repentance, though it precede justification, is only necessary to prepare the mind for the exercise of the faith, which alone is the condition of pardon.

Lastly, we are told that "to speak of the existence of repentance before faith, involves the absurdity of making the knowledge of sin precede the knowledge of law." The difficulty here, is only imaginary, being predicated upon a mistaken notion of the nature of that faith which the Scriptures connect with justification. If faith in this sense was nothing more than the assent of the mind to the truth of the gospel facts, as our opponents teach, then indeed, to speak of repentance before faith, would be absurd. But it was shown in a former number that this view of faith is defective, and falls short of the Scriptural definition. Let it suffice for the present to observe, that the faith of assent, a cordial belief of the testimony of God, under the influence of divine grace, is sufficient to produce serious consideration of our ways, and sorrowful conviction of the evil

and danger of sin ; we then turn to God with contrite hearts, and earnest prayers for mercy. This is called “ repentance toward God ;” and this prepares us for the exercise of that “ faith in the Lord Jesus Christ,” which combines with the *assent* of the *mind*, the *consent* of the *will*, and the *reliance* of the *affections*, and which in the economy of Heaven, is made the sole condition of our pardon.

## CHAPTER III.

## DIVINE AGENCY—THE SPIRIT.

Campbellism rejects Divine Agency on the heart—in connecting Remission with Baptism, like Roman Catholicism, it contradicts Paul—it enjoins an impossible term of Salvation—Campbellite doctrine of Assurance—fallacy of inferring our Acceptance from our Baptism—cases Exemplifying the foregoing—Mr. C. quoted—Irreverent and Blasphemous language of Campbellites respecting the Spirit—Scripture evidence of his direct influence on the heart—assurance of God's favor by the Spirit—evangelical Protestants are substantially agreed, on this point.

The principles previously established prove, that Mr. Campbell's "ancient gospel" is not quite so "ancient" as the New Testament; and we did not originally design to pursue the subject any farther. But the dangerous tendency of this theory will justify, if indeed it does not require, something more; and having many arguments and objections in reserve, we proceed to state a few of them.

Campbellism teaches that men believe the gospel, "by their own efforts," "after the same manner that they believe Rome to be situated on the Tiber," and that "that is saving faith, which purifies the heart;" then they "reform," also by their own efforts; then they are immersed by the efforts of another person, and

thus they become "new creatures." This is the Alpha and the Omega of the process of regeneration, according to Mr. Campbell's gospel.

But as this system rejects all divine agency upon the heart, in exciting and aiding the sinner to turn to God, and in the production of faith, it is obviously unscriptural. "No man can come unto me except the Father draw him," says the Savior; and the Scriptures tell us, that "the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to attend to the "things which were spoken by Paul." Now, the things which Paul spoke were the gospel and its requirements; and these, according to Campbellism, are all that men need to induce and enable them to believe and obey; but in Lydia's case another agency was necessary, the Lord had to open and influence her heart to attend to those things. The command to pray for sinners, necessarily, presupposes the exercise of a divine influence upon their hearts; and this influence is clearly taught by St. Paul in the 3d chapter of 1st Corinthians: "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man." Here, the success of their ministry is not ascribed to the natural tendency of the words spoken, but to another cause—"even as the Lord gave to every man." For, continues the Apostle, "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." But how did God give the increase, if all the converting power was in the Word? Paul was certainly a strong preacher, and pro-



claimed the gospel with an ability not surpassed by Mr. Campbell, or any of his followers. He also possessed miraculous gifts and powers. But neither his preaching, nor his miracles were efficacious in saving souls, and increasing the church, till God sent his spirit to convince of sin, and bring the sinner to the cross of the Savior for pardon. Thus the great Apostle of the Gentiles, in his efforts to reform the world, more modest than the apostles of Campbellism, in their reformation, repelled the idea that the conversion of his hearers was the effect of his preaching, irrespective of the influence of the Holy Spirit.

In this passage a divine influence not contained in the word preached, is represented as accompanying and rendering it productive; and our Apostle in a few words, on another occasion, demolished the notion, that saving faith is exercised solely by our own efforts. In *Col. ii. 12*, the sinner is represented as being brought from the condemnation of sin, "through the faith of the operation of God." That faith, then, by which "our old man is crucified," and through which we are raised to "newness of life," is "of the operation of God," and not of our own unaided efforts.

But do not understand us, that God believes for the sinner, or that He compels him to believe. Such absurdities do not disgrace our creed. Man is so "far gone from original righteousness" that he has not the ability of himself, by his own efforts, to exercise that re-

*liance* upon a crucified Savior, which is implied in believing “with the *heart* unto righteousness.” Hence the necessity for a divine agency to grant him the power to repent and believe. The power to exercise faith is, therefore, the “gift” and “operation of God.” But the grace or ability to believe, does not necessitate the exercise of that ability. God gives the former and holds the sinner accountable for the latter. And thus, saving faith is both the gift of God, and the act of the creature.

Another objection to the doctrine which inseparably connects immersion with remission of sins, is, that like the Catholic system, it contradicts the Apostle, who says, “It is God that justifieth.”

The Catholic, while he nominally concedes that God only can forgive sins, declares that sins can only be forgiven through the agency of the priest who baptizes the penitent, or the priest who receives his confessions; and the Campbellite, while he disclaims all design of robbing God of the glory of remitting sins, proclaims that remission of sins is inseparably connected with the performance of an ordinance, a work which man has to do. But, unfortunately for their propagators, neither of these schemes can be reconciled to the declaration of the Apostle. For the confessor and the baptizer, being free agents, may refuse to act, in which case there could be no forgiveness, and, dying in that situation, the penitent must be lost in spite of the willingness of a merci-

ful God to save him. Thus the Catholic priest, and the Campbellite are beheld standing on the same ground, teaching the traditions of men instead of the commandments of God, and substantially claiming a greater agency in the justification of the sinner, than they concede to their Maker. But St. Paul tells us plainly, "It is one God who shall justify the circumcision *by faith*, and the uncircumcision *through faith*." We prefer his opinion to both of these.

Again, we object to the immersion theory for pardon, on the ground that it charges Him, in whom "were hid the treasures of wisdom," with the folly of having failed to suit his religion to the circumstances of many for whom it was intended.

Every believer in the Bible will admit that christianity is designed to be universal, and that it will prevail wherever man is found. The requirements of this religion must, therefore, be practicable in all countries, and attainable under all circumstances. Now we do not question the adaptation of christianity to all the countries, and states, and conditions of men; but Mr. Campbell's views of christianity are very different. No man can be a christian without remission of sins, and remission, according to Mr. Campbell, can only be had through immersion; but immersion is neither attainable in all countries, nor practicable under all circumstances.

In the Arctic regions, where, during two

thirds of the year, the water is all frozen, and in the torrid plains of Africa and Asia where the supplies of water are barely sufficient to sustain life, immersion is impossible. In our own land, the cold is sometimes so severe that immersion is impracticable and dangerous; and sometimes, the drought prevails till the pools and streams have disappeared in many parts of the country, and it is rendered extremely difficult, if not impossible, to find water for this ceremony. Add to this, that immersion is frequently forbidden by the situation of the penitent. Numerous cases of persons in delicate and declining health, might be adduced. Let one suffice. See that lady in the last stage of consumption. Reduced to a skeleton, her strength is gone, her days are numbered. Knowing that she must shortly appear before her Creator, in a world of spirits, and feeling herself a sinner, every power of thought and desire of soul is directed to Him for mercy. But she has never been immersed, and now she cannot be; hence, she must die unforgiven, and be eternally excluded from heaven.

We are aware, that Campbellism attempts to evade this result, by supposing it possible, as immersion in her case is out of the question, for her to be saved without it. But this miserable evasion amounts to a surrender of the cause which it is designed to sustain. God has revealed but one method of pardoning sin. Wherever the gospel is preached, its terms must be complied with, or there can be no remission.

The case of this lady is in some sense, the case of all sinners. Though she cannot be immersed now she is dying, she has neglected many opportunities of attending to this while in health. Other sinners do no more, and incur no more guilt by their neglect than she has done. Therefore, to admit that she may be saved without immersion, is to admit the truth, that all may be saved without it.

Indeed, we cannot conceive of a greater absurdity, than to suppose salvation possible without immersion, and yet believe Campbellism to be true. It involves the absurdity of imagining the salvation of one who is "unjustified, unadopted, unsanctified, unconverted, unregenerated, not born of God," "lost to all christian life and enjoyment," and destitute of "the peace of God, and the hope of heaven." For this, according to Mr. Campbell, is the wretched situation of the unimmersed.

This system then amounts to the declaration, "no immersion—no salvation." And as the lady above mentioned, cannot be immersed, she cannot be saved. And so with all who die in those countries, at those times, and under circumstances that render a resort to this mode of baptism inexpedient or impossible. Let it also be observed that the neglect of the baptizer, or the postponement of his work for a day, or a single hour, must endanger the soul of the applicant, and may occasion its final ruin. A fit of apoplexy or something else calls him suddenly away; and however deep his penitence, fer-

vent his prayers, and strong his faith, he is lost, because the baptizer neglected his duty.

Such are the unavoidable consequences of that system which we oppose. It charges the "only wise God" with the folly of having established a religion, intended for universal application, which can never be practiced in many parts of the earth, and which is unsuited to the wants and conditions of helpless man; and it involves the absurdity of making the soul's salvation to depend upon the *will* of the baptizer, instead of the faith of the penitent, and the mercy of God. Could such a system emanate from the Fountain of wisdom; or is it the offspring of some bewildered visionary, "ignorant of the righteousness of God," and laboring to "establish his own righteousness?"

Let us now, in contrast with Mr. Campbell's substitute, look at God's plan for remission, as revealed in the Scriptures, and defended in these essays.

Men are sinners. The gospel finds them in this condition, and the Holy Spirit convinces them of it, by visiting every heart, and connecting His secret influences with the external means of grace, to awaken the sinner to a sense of his danger, and win his heart to God. By this operation of the "good Spirit," in conjunction with the Word, read or expounded, conviction of the *fact* of sin is produced. Yielding to this conviction, the sinner is brought to apprehend the penalty of the law, and pain-

ful anticipations of the consequences of sin follow ; and thus he is moved by a sense of his danger to look out for a remedy ; and this being disclosed in the same revelation, and unfolded by the same Spirit from whose secret influences he has received this sense of his danger, he confesses his sins before God, and like the publican in the temple, exclaims, " God be merciful to me a sinner." And thus, as was shown in our last, his penitence and prayers, though not the condition of pardon, prepare his mind for the exercise of that act of faith, which the apostle calls believing " with the *heart* ;" in which he at once acknowledges his own unworthiness and helplessness, and flies with confidence to the mercy of his offended God, proclaimed " through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Now, though as depraved beings, we have not the natural ability thus to come to Christ and believe, yet this is compensated in the fact that the grace of the Holy Spirit imparts the ability to all who desire and seek it ; and hence if we are not saved the fault is wholly our own. All who improve the grace that is given, and yield to the drawings of the Spirit, are aided and graciously excited, confidently to rely upon the promises of God, and with a believing heart to " lay hold on the hope set before them." And he who thus believes is not dependent on " an arm of flesh" to take him " down into the water" and obtain his pardon ; he has already obtained it " by grace, through faith," without bap-

tism, or any other “works\* of righteousness.” This is God’s plan of justifying the ungodly; a plan which manifests his grace and goodness to fallen man by placing the conditions of pardon within the reach of every one who hears the gospel, so that no external circumstance can prevent a compliance. “Whosoever will” may “come, and partake of the waters of life freely.” Though he be perishing amid the perpetual

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\* We were recently favored with the perusal of a letter from a Campbellite teacher, in which it is denied that the New Testament speaks of “repentance, baptism, the Lord’s Supper, or prayer, or praise, or preaching, or other christian duties, as being works;” and asserted that, “wherever *works* are mentioned, it is in reference to something else than the gospel.” Really this is something we did not previously understand. We had been so ignorant as to suppose that St. Paul, when he exhorted the Corinthians to be “always abounding in the *work* of the Lord,” intended to enjoin the duties of the gospel; and that the command to the church at Ephesus, “Remember, therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do thy first *works*,” did mean that they should *repent* or *pray*, or perform “other christian duties.” These were our opinions; and under the influence of a “purblind theology,” this state of ignorance might have remained, but for the labors of this sapient reformer, who has discovered that “to *work* out our own salvation” does not require the performance of “christian duties,” but works of Jewish or Turkish or Pagan requirement, for wherever the apostles “mention works, it is in reference to something else than the gospel.”

To be serious: that system which for its support requires its advocates thus to climb to the pinnacle of the superlative degree of nonsense, cannot be of God. If it can survive the present generation, we are much mistaken.



snows of the north, or scorched by the vertical rays of an African sun, where there is no water, or sick and at the point of death,

“In every condition, in sickness or health,  
In poverty’s vale, or abounding in wealth,”

the penitent may comply with God’s terms, believe with the heart, receive remission of sins, and go home to glory.

It is thus seen, that the Scripture scheme of justification by faith alone, displays the goodness and wisdom of God, in its admirable adaptation to the wants and conditions of man, and that it is every way worthy of its Divine Author; while the immersion scheme, involves so many difficulties and absurdities, and is so entirely defective in meeting the wants of the human family, that it is with difficulty we can assign it so respectable an origin, as the imaginations of men possessing common sense and sound judgment.

An assurance, or comfortable persuasion of regeneration and adoption is, in the New Testament, promised to those who receive remission of sins. “Being justified by faith we have *peace* with God.” Though the blessings of regeneration and adoption are different from each other, and from justification, yet they are not to be separated, because they take place at the same time, and they all enter into the experience of the same individual; so that no man is justified without being regenerated and adopted, and no man is regenerated and made a son of God, who is not justified. And he who thus becomes

“a new creature” is furnished with the evidence that he is freed from condemnation. Thus “the peace of God” is inseparably connected with remission of sins. A similar connection obtains in Mr. Campbell’s system. But as his method of obtaining pardon is unauthorized by Scripture, so, also, is his method of arriving at a knowledge of sins forgiven.

His followers are taught to predicate an assurance of their adoption upon the fact that they have been immersed, and thereby to make immersion the means of obtaining pardon, and the principal evidence that they are pardoned.— They reason thus: “If a good and solvent man were to promise me a sum of money, upon the condition that I performed a certain work, having confidence in his honesty and ability, and knowing that I had complied with the condition, I would be sure of the reward; and as God, whose word cannot fail, has promised remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit consequent upon baptism, I know that my obedience has secured my pardon and my adoption.” This kind of logic is in perfect character with the system they have embraced, and by it they attempt to reason themselves into the belief that “all is well.” Having previously shown that the Scriptures do not promise remission of sins, in the sense it is here understood, upon the condition of baptism, we proceed to prove the reasoning here adopted to be fallacious, and that the conclusion drawn from it is dangerous.

If the above argument will hold good in the

case to which it is applied, it must be equally valid in all similar cases ; consequently, as God has promised “ the Holy Spirit to them that *ask*,” and salvation to such as “ *call* upon the name of the Lord,” he who has prayed is authorized to infer, that he has the Holy Spirit and is saved. But this conclusion is no where warranted by the Word of God, nor can it be reconciled to the experiences of christians ; for though we may receive the “ Holy Spirit ” and salvation from sin, in the act of prayer, it is not true that these blessings are always received in the performance of that duty ; and hence, to conclude ourselves pardoned and adopted because we have prayed, is wholly unjustifiable. And yet, this process has more to support it, than that upon which the Campbellite predicates his confidence ; for the Scriptures present prayer as having a connection with remission of sins, which they no where ascribe to baptism. They inform us of some, at least, who were pardoned and saved without being baptized, but we have yet to learn that any one ever was pardoned without previous repentance and *prayer*.

The fallacy of the attempt to infer our acceptance with God from a knowledge of our baptism, is further seen in the fact, that every baptized individual has the same kind of evidence, and on the same ground may prove himself a child of God ; a position so entirely untenable that it carries its own refutation. Mr. Campbell, indeed, is aware of this difficulty ; but in attempting to guard against it, he has left the

point sufficiently vulnerable to sustain our charge. After having asserted concerning the apostolic age, that "no person was said to be converted until he was immersed; and [that] all persons who were immersed, were said to be converted," and assured his followers, that "when they were led down into the water, and concealed in its womb," that "there their consciences were released, and their old sins purged away," he anticipates the objection that his doctrine would lead to the conclusion that every immersed person is born of God, and tries to evade it by saying, "If the immersed person do not believe the gospel, he is, to speak after the manner of men, *still-born*; but if he believe the gospel he is born of God, whenever he is born of water."\* Now, bear in mind, that Mr. Campbell admits no higher degree of faith than a historical belief of the gospel facts, just as we "believe Rome to be situated on the Tiber," and all who thus believe, he asserts, to be "born of God when they are born of water." And as every sinner in christendom, except he be a *sheer* infidel, believes the gospel facts, it follows according to Mr. Campbell's own showing, that every immersed individual, unless he condemn the Bible, and for some sinister design act the part of a base and conscious hypocrite, has evidence that he is born of

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\* These quotations, made from memory from Mr. C.'s "Millennial Harbinger," may not be verbatim, but they are substantially correct.

God, and adopted into his family. Such is the conclusion.

But this is equally repugnant to gospel facts, and to facts of every day occurrence. Simon, the sorcerer, "believed (the gospel facts no doubt) and was baptized," but remained "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity;" and, alas! had he lived to the present day, how many might he have found to keep him in countenance! It is painful to reflect that numbers with a historic belief (which Simon certainly had) have been led down into the water, and "intelligently" and with the "full faith" of A. Campbell, immersed for remission of sins, who came out of the water, as they went into it, unpardoned sinners, and whose works have, ever since, declared them to be destitute of the "washing of regeneration" and the "renewing of the Holy Ghost."

In presenting this difficulty we were once admonished by an opponent, to look at home, and remember that the members of our own denomination sometimes fail to yield the fruits of the Spirit. This is a lamentable truth; and one which we neither deny, nor attempt to extenuate; but the cases are entirely dissimilar. We have no "institution" which enables us to pronounce to a certainty that the sins of our members "are purged away." Content to stand on gospel principles, we tell men "to examine themselves," and then we judge of them "by their fruits;" but Mr. Campbell has assumed a different ground. He has "discovered" among

“the rubbish of human traditions, an *institution* inseparably connected with remission of sins, like which there was no institution since the world began ;” and this, he tells us, “is christian immersion, sometimes called conversion.” In this, then, he claims an infallible rule, which enables him to pronounce all his members (hypocritical infidels excepted) really converted ; and by which every immersed person may know of a truth, that he is an adopted child of God. But Campbellites and the world do know, that multitudes, who, in all probability, cordially believed the gospel facts, and were immersed for remission, have no more of christianity than the name. Therefore, this rule will not apply to all ; and of course it is good for nothing.

Some of our opponents here make another effort to escape, by asserting that they, like us, believe in the possibility of apostatizing from the favor of God. But this effort, is, also, abortive. “If any man have not the spirit of Christ,” he cannot lose it ; and he who has that spirit will manifest it by *its fruits*, as pointed out by the apostle. But many of the immersed, so far from having shown any of the fruits of the Spirit, by a pious walk, have ever continued a notorious indulgence in the “works of the flesh ;” and hence, as they never possessed the grace or favor of God, in the sense of pardon, they could not have lost it. By way of confirmation, take the following statements :

During the prevalence of cholera in Kentucky, when the *water mania* was at its zenith, the

Campbellite teachers labored to convince the people that the Almighty was angry with them because they were disobedient, and that he would speedily destroy them, unless they submitted to be immersed. These assertions were received and believed, and hence hundreds of poor deluded sinners, instead of humbling themselves before God, "with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning," fled for refuge to the water, and there, by making "one low bow," expected to obtain salvation. This act sufficiently proved their sincerity. But how few of them have since manifested more of the "fruits of the Spirit," than are seen in the character of the unbaptized Mussulman? A case in point. A young man, who during that time was immersed for remission, was guilty of profane swearing a few hours after his baptism; the same week, was seen in a state of intoxication, and continued a course of intemperance till it sent his soul to eternity. Now it is next to an impossibility to believe, that any one in his situation, expecting every day to be called to a world of spirits by the dreaded epidemic, could be immersed from hypocritical or dishonest motives. He certainly believed the gospel facts as developed by his teacher, had all the faith Mr. Campbell requires; and if immersion is, to any man, proof of his being a child of God, it was this to him; but he continued to "live after the flesh," and showed the spirit of "the wicked one," even from the hour of his baptism.

Another case. In the county of B——, in this state, two men, whom we will call A and B, conversing about Mr. Campbell and his followers, A declared that he would join them the next Sabbath. This was questioned by B, and finally the sum of five dollars was staked upon the issue. Sabbath came, and A presented himself as a candidate for the saving ordinance. B was also present, and informed the baptizer of the pending wager. But as A averred his belief of the gospel facts, and demanded baptism for remission of sins, the ceremony proceeded, and B lost his money.\* This man, though he honestly believed the gospel facts, could not have been pardoned ; for he not only regarded “iniquity in his heart,” but was immersed with the design of putting the “wages of sin” into his pocket : and yet he can plead his baptism in evidence of his pardon, with as much confidence as any other Campbellite.

It is presumable that all, who, upon being sincerely awakened by the spirit of God, fly to the water for relief, learn by sad experience the following truth :

“Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,  
Can wash the dismal stain away.”

At any rate, we have had information of some, who after their baptism declared in the plainest

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\* Neither this, nor the case before named came under the immediate notice of the writer ; but he received both from sources which he considers unquestionable.



manner that they had been duped, and wofully disappointed.

The following circumstance, of which we were recently informed, is in point. A gentleman not far from Cincinnati, who was deeply penitent, upon hearing a proclamation of Mr. Campbell's gospel, believed the report, and rejoicing to find so easy a road to heaven, was immersed, with full confidence of obtaining relief from a guilty conscience. But, alas ! instead of the anticipated "peace and joy," he felt, as one on a similar occasion expressed himself, nothing but the cold water. Being sadly deceived in the effects of the operation, he did not conceal it from his brethren ; and they, supposing, perhaps, that there had been something defective in the work, advised him to try it again ; but not relishing the proposal, and being disgusted with such mummary, he concluded christianity to be a mere cheat, and by turning infidel, succeeded for a time in stifling his convictions. In this condition he went to a camp meeting, where the word preached, again reaching his heart, he sought the Lord according to his Word, by repentance and prayer, and learned by joyful experience, that God has power to forgive sins, "by grace" "through faith," without one drop of water.

Other circumstances and cases, in character similar to those above mentioned, might be adduced ; but we forbear. The observant reader, familiar with the practical operations of Campbellism, needs neither arguments nor facts to

convince him of the absurdity of the attempt to prove that an individual is regenerated because he is baptized. Having seen the entire failure of a burial in water to produce holiness of life, he is prepared to smile at the delusion, and to pity the condition of all who rely upon it.

But lest some should suppose our coloring too high, and imagine that Mr. Campbell does not make baptism so important as we represent, we give another quotation from his writings. In the "Debate with M'Calla," as published by Mr. Campbell, he tells us that God "appointed baptism to be to every one that believed the record he has given of his Son, a *formal pledge on his part* of that believer's personal acquittal or pardon; so significant and so expressive, that when the baptized believer rises out of the water, *is born of water*, enters the world the second time, he enters it as *innocent, as clean, as unspotted as an angel*. His conscience is purged from guilt, his body is washed with pure water, even the "washing of regeneration." Here the Campbellite is taught by his leader, that baptism is a *formal pledge of his pardon*, and that he rose from the water *as holy as an angel*. And certainly, from such a beginning, we are authorized to expect a life of corresponding holiness. But many who thus "entered the world from the womb of waters," "as innocent, as clean, as unspotted as angels," really appear the "worse for mending." Alas, for christianity!

The cases mentioned of the entire failure of

the “regenerating bath” to make practical christians, were not adduced to wound the feelings of our opponents. To sport with the feelings of any man, or wantonly to offend one of the “little ones” of God’s family, forms no part of our design in writing these essays. That some whose heads have been bewildered by Campbell’s dogmas, are sincere christians, we neither doubt, nor wish to doubt; but we, nevertheless, firmly believe that those dogmas never did make a christian, and never can make one. And, hence, without the least desire to reproach the pious of that sect, by charging them with the sins of their brethren, we felt it our duty, in opposing a dangerous departure from “the faith once delivered to the saints,” to test its truth by inspecting its practical effects. This course seemed the more justifiable from the consideration that the system we oppose teaches men to consider themselves justified and sanctified because they have been baptized. To show the insufficiency of this kind of evidence, the circumstances referred to above, were introduced, and we still look upon them as proof of the strongest character. For certainly, if one individual who with Mr. Campbell’s “full faith” received baptism for remission of sins, has manifested himself to be still in the “gall of bitterness,” it shows to ocular demonstration that baptism does not afford evidence of a justified state; and if one case is proof so decisive, who can resist the accumulated testimony of the fact, that numbers, perhaps a large ma-

jority, who were thus "washed" have, by continuing "to wallow in the mire of sin," manifested a total destitution of the christian graces?

That Mr. Campbell authorizes his followers to consider themselves the adopted sons of God because they have been baptized, was shown already; and that they take him at his word, and rely upon his instructions, is clearly seen in their words and actions. When one of their teachers was asked for his *experience*, he replied, "I believed and was immersed, and this is all the experience I have, or desire to have." Another informed his hearers, that if they believed the Bible and would let him immerse them, he would ensure them the enjoyment of heaven; that he would plead their cause in the day of judgment, by stating that they had believed and obeyed, and therefore must be admitted; and from the pulpit we have frequently heard the following argument, if argument it may be called: "Men may be happy and have good feelings in imagining their sins forgiven, but it is all delusion; the immersed, and they only, have a knowledge of forgiveness, satisfactory and certain. Suppose a criminal under sentence of death, sues for a reprieve, which is granted upon condition that he depart from the state within ten days; he may have the reprieve in his possession, with the governor's signature, and might therefore imagine himself secure, but it is certain he is not pardoned until he pass the boundary of the state. So it is with the sinner,

who is promised a pardon upon the condition of a 'believing immersion.' As soon as he is immersed, he has evidence of forgiveness; and until then, whatever may be his feelings, or his hopes, they are delusive, and he is under condemnation. But when he has obeyed, he is assured of his pardon—not a doubt remains—he may rejoice evermore."

Now from the above it is clear, that the Campbellite is taught to view his baptism as evidence of his regeneration and pardon; a doctrine wholly unknown to the New Testament, and as dangerous as it is unscriptural. It is true, the Scriptures teach that the christian need not walk in darkness, or remain destitute of a knowledge of sins forgiven; but their method of obtaining this knowledge, and their revelations of its nature, are as far removed from the teachings of A. Campbell, as light from darkness. For while he would predicate this knowledge upon the evidence of our baptism, the Scriptures refer it to the witness of the Spirit, "sent forth into our hearts crying, Abba, Father."

But here we touch a key whose sound is probably as grating to the feelings of our opponents as the most horrid jargon to the refined and sensitive musician; for though Mr. Campbell admits that the christian must possess "the spirit of Christ," it is much doubted whether he or his followers believe the Holy Spirit to have any such influence upon the souls of men as christians consider the Bible to teach. In

the Campbellite vocabulary, the Spirit, as concerned in our salvation, means either the *written Word*, or a *disposition of mind* consistent with the christian profession. From the earliest dawnings of this *new gospel*, its propagators have manifested a disposition to play off their irony and ridicule against the idea of the love of God being shed abroad in the heart "by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." One of their most popular leaders in this state, was formerly in the habit, in his public harangues, of classing this doctrine with the ghost and witch stories of a credulous and superstitious age, and of inquiring with a satirical sneer, of those who profess to have received the Holy Spirit, "How did you get it? Where did it enter into you? At the head, or the feet, or under the fifth rib, or where?" Another of the same school, and in the same strain, has been heard to ask, "Granting that you are possessed of a Spirit, how do you know but that it is the spirit of the devil?" And others with equal recklessness of consequences and disregard of the teachings of Scripture, have said, "While the orthodox talk of having the Spirit in their *hearts*, we are content to carry it in our *pockets*."

That the above, or similar irreverent and blasphemous expressions, have been used by the popular teachers of Campbellism, is susceptible of abundant proof; and though Mr. Campbell may never have used them, they are certainly the natural consequences of his system. The positions assumed in his system,

and some of the arguments advanced for its support, are so much like those resorted to by the opposers of revealed religion, that the utmost we can expect as a general result, of those who embrace it is, that they have a "form of godliness," while they deny "the power."

The influence of the Holy Spirit upon the heart, is one of the doctrines of christianity against which deism, under the names of natural and rational religion, has urged its most strenuous objections; and the teachings of Mr. Campbell and his followers, on this subject, are well calculated to keep these objections in countenance. In addition to the assumption, stated formerly, that man does not need the assistance of the Spirit, to induce, or to enable him to turn to God, Campbellism tells us, that such an influence is impossible; that we can receive no ideas or impressions except through the medium of the senses; and as the eye cannot see nor the ear hear the influence which the Spirit is said to exercise, it is, therefore, argued that the idea of such an intercourse is only a whim of the imagination. It is true, this argument is adduced to oppose the doctrine that sinners are aided and excited by the Spirit, to repent and believe the gospel; but it is equally opposed to the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit with the spirit of the believer, and, also, as Mr. Waterman has shown, to the fact of the miraculous gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost. Indeed, to admit the above argument, and carry it out to its legitimate results, would

be to reduce christianity to a mere system of ethics, differing but little from the moral codes of heathen philosophy, except in its external rites and ceremonies.

But we do not admit it. It is assertion, and not proof. It never has been proved, nor can it ever be, that there is any thing impossible in the intercourse of the Spirit of God with the spirits of men. Cannot that Being who made us, who is himself a pure spirit, have immediate access to our spirits, so as to influence our thoughts, affections, and wills, without either words or signs? To admit the possibility of this, is certainly far more reasonable, than to deny it. Before such an influence can be proved to be impossible, the objector must thoroughly understand the laws of *perception*, *memory*, and *association*, which is more, we believe, than any philosopher, however deep his researches into the causes of the phenomena of mind, ever pretended to know. It is readily admitted that when men suggest thoughts, or influence the minds of other men, they must do it through the *medium* of words or signs. But to suppose these the only means by which this can be effected, is to found an objection wholly upon our ignorance. To argue, because we cannot do this, that, therefore, God cannot, and to deny with the Campbellite the possibility of this divine intercourse and influence with our spirits and upon our hearts, is to reduce the Almighty down to our finite minds and limited understandings; to imagine him "altogether



such a one as ourselves ;” and to reject some of the most positive declarations and comforting promises of the gospel.

Some remarks were introduced in the last paragraph to show that an intercourse of the Spirit of God with our spirits, is not impossible. But why contend for the possibility of that which is clearly taught in that book, which our opponents profess to receive as the Word of God ? In the Scriptures, which form the only sufficient rule both of our faith and practice, and become the arbiter in all controversies involving christian principles, the whole work of salvation in the soul is represented as being wrought by the Holy Spirit. We understand the Bible in this light, and believe that common sense and fair criticism can view it in no other. Few things seem more plainly taught in the Scriptures, than the doctrine of the operations of the Spirit, in convincing the sinner of sin, and in comforting the believer.

Before the flood, the Holy Spirit is represented as striving with the antediluvians, to bring them to repentance, of whom the Almighty declared, “ My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” To sustain his system, Mr. Campbell tells us that the “ Spirit,” here, only means the preaching of Noah. But this, again, is assertion without proof. God says it was his Spirit ; Mr. Campbell says, it was Noah’s preaching. The reader will be at no loss which to believe.

Under the law the wicked are said to “ grieve,”

and to “resist the Holy Ghost,” which certainly implies that *it* then strove with them. Here we are again told, that to *resist the Spirit* means only to *resist the Word*. But once for all, we remark, that this assertion in the absence of all proof, and contrary to the plain letter of Scripture, comes with very ill grace from those who so frequently tell us, that “the Scriptures mean what they say.”

In reference to the gospel dispensation, we are taught in the New Testament, that the work of the Spirit is to reprove the sinner and bring him back to God, as well as to comfort and sustain the christian. That the Spirit convinces of sin, is obvious from numerous passages and arguments in the discourses of our Lord, and in the writings of the apostles. Before his crucifixion, the Savior promised to send “the Comforter, even the Spirit of truth,” to abide with his followers for ever, and to “reprove the world of sin.” On this passage we observe, 1st. This cannot mean the Spirit in its miraculous gifts, for that was given for a time only, but the Spirit here promised is to “abide for ever;” and, 2nd. The work and influences of the Spirit as here pointed out, cannot be restricted to the christian, because a part of that work is to “reprove the world of sin, because they believe not;” and as “he that believeth not is condemned already,” consequently the person thus reproved is no christian. It is true that the Savior declared the world could not receive the Comforter, and this is urged by

Campbellites in proof of their notion that the Spirit has nothing to do with the sinner. But the effort is certainly a failure. We readily concede, that a worldly minded sinner cannot receive the Spirit as a comforter, for it is "because ye are sons" that "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father;" but this by no means proves that the sinner cannot be *reproved* by the Spirit. Indeed, one of his offices, developed in the text before us, is to "reprove the world of sin." In doing which he must operate upon the hearts of sinners; and when they open the door and let him in, they being no longer of "the world," receive him as a comforter.

We are wandering from our main object by enlarging upon a point which we intended barely to touch, but having engaged in it we shall take the liberty to introduce another argument. The Savior is represented in Scripture, as "the Sun of Righteousness," the illuminator of man. This may be said, chiefly with reference to the gospel as published to the world; but the idea is sometimes used in a sense so comprehensive, that we must travel beyond the circulation of the gospel to find its application. St. John speaks of Christ as "the true *light*, which *lighteth* every man that cometh into the world." Now, a large portion that come "into the world" are not only sinners, but pagans and barbarians, destitute of the knowledge contained in the written Word; but still Christ "lighteth them," which he must do by his Spirit, convincing

them of sin, and giving them some knowledge of good and evil. Under whatever restrictions and limitations the phrase "all men" may at times be used, they cannot, according to the genius of language, apply to the phrase before us, "every man." By saying *every man in Kentucky*, we necessarily include the whole of the inhabitants of the state; and so "every man that cometh into the world" must mean all, without exception, that ever did, or ever will inhabit the world. Hence, in order to find one man who is and ever has been destitute of the reproofs and strivings of the Spirit of Christ, we must go to some other planet. He never came into the world, and consequently, cannot be found among the children of men on the earth.

Having now seen that the doctrine of the operation of the Spirit upon the heart of the sinner, is authenticated by the Word of infallible inspiration, we resume the consideration of the believer's *evidence*, that he is freed from "condemnation."

That it is the privilege of the child of God to have an assurance of his favor, sufficient to impart substantial comfort, few christians will deny. If then, being "by nature children of wrath," it is possible for us to become "new creatures," and to enjoy satisfactory evidence that "we have passed from death unto life," it deeply concerns us to know what that evidence is, and upon what it is predicated. And having seen that the Campbellite's evidence,

immersion, will not suffice, even to hang a *hope* upon, we turn to the New Testament, and examine the case by the principles we may there find.

In addition to the Savior's promise of "the Comforter" to abide with his followers, the New Testament informs us that God "dwells in them," that they are "born of the Spirit," "led by the Spirit," "justified and sanctified by the Spirit," and "sealed" by the same Spirit, "unto the day of redemption." If then, the situation of the christian be such as to warrant the application of the above phrases to him, it is certainly reasonable to suppose that he does not remain ignorant of the fact, that he has passed "from darkness to light;" and what we here suppose reasonable, is abundantly established by Scripture testimony. "There is now no *condemnation* to them that are in Christ Jesus." "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith." "If we say we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth." "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the *witness* in himself." So says the Book. And when we inquire, what is the "witness" which the believer has "in himself?" the same volume furnishes a definite answer. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba, Father. The *Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit*, that we are the child-

ren of God." Rom. viii, 14, 16. In this passage it is clear, that, "the Spirit of God," mentioned in the 14th verse, and "the Spirit" which "beareth witness," in the 16th, are the same; consequently, "the witness" which the believer has "in himself," is "the Spirit of God."

If there remain a doubt relative to the correctness of this conclusion, the qualifying term "*itself*," seems sufficient to remove it. "The Spirit **ITSELF** beareth witness with our spirit." This language is so emphatic and unequivocal, that it would be difficult to find anything more clear and definite. Suppose the apostle had said, "The water of baptism itself bears witness of our son-ship." Would any Campbellite doubt his meaning? No. The text would then be urged, and very properly too, as proof decisive, in his favor. But as it stands, it is equally decisive against him. The Holy Ghost himself, and neither our baptism nor our prayers, is declared to witness our adoption. How the honest, intelligent Campbellite, with this, and numerous corroborating passages before him, can sneer at this kind of evidence, and assert that he has in his baptism an evidence of his pardon that would be taken in any court of justice, forms a problem we are not able to solve.

The view we have taken of the above passages, in connection with the spirit and letter of other parts of the Sacred Volume, has been received by most divines of eminence, from

Luther and Calvin, down to John Wesley, and to the present day. Indeed we cannot see how any man with proper views of the Scriptures, of protestantism, and of experimental and practical religion, can question the doctrine of *assurance*, by the witness of the Spirit. We are aware, however, that some difference of opinion has obtained among evangelical divines, relative to the method of arriving at this assurance; some having concluded that we obtain it by *inference*, others, by the *direct testimony* of the Holy Spirit to the mind. But this difference exists in appearance, more than in reality; neither of the opinions militates against the doctrine itself, and when carried out, they result substantially, in the same conclusion. Those who contend for the *direct testimony* of the Spirit, include the corroborating evidence of *inference*; and those who plead for the *inferential testimony*, reasoning from effect to cause, cannot but admit the *direct witness* of the Spirit. None of the divines of this latter class conceive a bare reformation of conduct to be sufficient ground for the inference that we are justified; they all contend for a change of heart, concomitant with justification, for a renewal of mind, and the existence of the hallowed affections of *love, peace and joy*; and that this change, in all its parts, is effected by the *direct agency* of the Holy Spirit. We therefore conclude, that so far as our present inquiry is concerned, there is no essential difference between the two opinions; each involves the

*witness* of the Spirit ; and hence we repeat, that the leading divines of the reformed churches, have ever considered the Scriptures as teaching, that the believer is assured by the Spirit of God, of his adoption. And shall we reject the concurring opinions of so many great and good men of different ages and sects, founded upon the principles and declarations of the New Testament, for the *ipse dixit* of the self-styled Reformer of Bethany ? Shall we at his command, surrender the *witness of the Spirit*, as taught in the Scriptures, for the soul-destroying, papal notion of baptismal regeneration and adoption ? God forbid.

The believer's *evidence* of his pardon is still before us. The conclusion at which we arrived, though evidently taught by the letter of the testimony of God, and commonly received among christians, is rejected by the Campbellite, upon the ground, that to expect a knowledge of the forgiveness of sins by the witness of the Spirit, subjects us to the charge of mysticism and enthusiasm. If by this we are to understand that the mode of operation by which the Divine Spirit communicates this knowledge to our spirits, is mysterious and incomprehensible, we plead guilty, and take shelter behind the Savior, who, in his conversation with Nicodemus, illustrated this subject, by alluding to the mysterious operation of the wind ; but if this is intended to brand us with trusting to *feelings* and *impressions*, unauthorised by the Word of God, or with relying upon an evidence that, from its



mysterious nature, is uncertain and unsatisfactory to him who has it, we deny the charge, and stand prepared to detect its fallacy.

“But how do you know,” says the Campbellite, “that the Spirit which persuades you that you are a child of God, is not the spirit of the devil?” To this question, Mr. Wesley has furnished an appropriate answer. “Even by the testimony of my own spirit, ‘by the answer of a good conscience toward God.’ Hereby you may know that you are in no delusion, that you have not deceived your own soul. The immediate fruits of the Spirit, ruling in the heart, are love, joy, peace, bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness, gentleness, long-suffering. And the outward fruits are, the doing good to all men, and a uniform obedience to all the commands of God.” Thus, the corroborating testimony of our own spirit, with which the Spirit of God bears witness, proves that the Spirit which assures us of our adoption, is the “good Spirit,” for he alone can fill the heart with *love to God, peace in the Lord Jesus Christ, and joy in the Holy Ghost*; and hence, we have two witnesses to the same fact, producing a consciousness of pardon, which, to the individual himself, is the strongest kind of evidence.

“But in this,” continues the objector, “you make your *feelings* the evidence of your pardon; and they are too fluctuating, and under the influence of too many external circumstances, to be a safe criterion.” It is admitted, that we do, in part, resort to our feelings to determine

this matter ; and we expect to do so as long as we can find such respectable authority as the infallible oracles of God to justify us. No man on Scriptural principles, nor even the Campbellite on his own unscriptural principles, can persuade himself of the remission of his sins, without recourse to his feelings ; for after all his parade about immersion, as being evidence of pardon, that would be received by any judge or jury, he does not pretend that it will be of any avail, unless received in faith. But how does he know that he has faith, but by his feelings, his consciousness ? It is thus seen, that a resort to our feelings is unavoidable, even on Mr. Campbell's scheme. Still he professes to discard this kind of evidence, and his followers are ever ready to make themselves merry at the expense of those who receive it ; we therefore repeat, that no man can have an assurance that God has pardoned him, without appealing to his feelings. If the Scriptures do not bring us to this conclusion, and warrant such an appeal, they teach nothing, they prove nothing. "We know," says St. John, "that we have passed from death unto life, because we *love* the brethren." Can love exist where there is no feeling ? Are not our feelings the only means by which we become conscious of its existence ? Again, St. Paul says, that "the kingdom of God is righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." Can the "peace of God" abide in us, and we remain unconscious of it ? Can we have "joy in the Holy Ghost," and be destitute of feeling ? Cer-

tainly not. Joy cannot exist in the absence of feeling. And as the kingdom of God consists of "peace and joy," it follows that the religion of Christ manifests itself to our feelings; and hence, if our opponents have discovered a religion, or a kingdom, from which these holy affections are excluded, it is a misnomer to call it the religion of the Bible, or the kingdom of God. They may, as suits their fancy, call it the religion of A. Campbell, or the kingdom of water, and locate it on some island; we shall neither give it a "local habitation nor a name," but rest content with entreating them not to insult the Majesty of heaven, so far as to call a thing by his name, which is directly opposed to his Word.

It is admitted that our feelings could not be relied upon in determining this matter, if we had no authority to appeal to them, and no standard to try them by. But the Scriptures furnish both the authority and the standard. The fruits of the Spirit, mentioned by the apostle, are, "love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, meekness, faith, temperance." Among the fruits here enumerated, we find affections, as well as principles and morals; *love, joy and peace*, as well as *gentleness, goodness, and temperance*. And while the latter are manifested to others in our *conduct*, the former are made known to ourselves in our *feelings*. To be more definite. The question at issue is, "Am I a child of God?" The Scriptures pronounce, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God," to be "the sons of God." My next in-

quiry then is, "Have I the Spirit of God?" To determine this, I examine for the "fruits of the Spirit," as pointed out in the Scriptures, and find among them, "love, joy, and peace." My next object, is, to determine whether I have these affections; and in order to this, I must have recourse to my feelings; for by them alone can I decide. They tell me that I "love the brethren," have "peace with God," and possess "joy in the Holy Ghost;" and the Bible tells me that this love, peace, and joy, are the fruits of the Spirit's agency, as the Comforter, the Spirit of adoption, and that they spring alone from that source. Thus it is clear, that irrespective of my feelings, I can have no knowledge of the forgiveness of sins; and that they, when brought to the standard of Scripture, furnish the most conclusive evidence, that the Spirit which bears witness with my spirit, is the "Spirit of God." Any evidence short of this, whether predicated upon immersion or confession, the Scriptures do not sanction. That *peace* of which we are insensible, cannot be possessed; *love* and *joy* unknown to our feelings, can have no existence.

And yet every Campbellite is taught not only to reject, but to ridicule the idea of a *feeling sense of the pardoning love of God by the witness of the Spirit*. It is one of their most popular topics, one on which they seem to dwell with great delight. In ridiculing those who rely on this kind of evidence, and in setting forth the excellency of their immersion evi-

dence, some of their leaders have reiterated the following strains, till they have grown familiar to most of their hearers. "He who relies on his baptism as evidence, can never doubt; his pardon is as sure as the truth of God. But how different the situation of the bewildered enthusiast, who talks about his feelings? He is like a criminal under sentence of death, chained and imprisoned, who concludes himself at liberty, and free from danger, because his feelings tell him so. But what good will his feelings do him? They will neither retard the day of death, nor procure him a reprieve. And just so with the unimmersed. He may imagine himself pardoned; his feelings may tell him he is safe; but it is all delusion." Upon this choice morsel of Campbellite preaching, we observe, 1. The illustration is inadmissible, because it supposes a case that can never happen. No man of sound mind could feel himself free and safe, while in prison under sentence of death; and, 2. The case to which the illustration is applied, is not fairly stated. He who has the witness of the Spirit does not *imagine* himself pardoned; he is assured of it by the only evidence which the Scriptures have authorized him to receive. As "it is God that justifieth," the justification of the sinner is at first known only to God; but in mercy to the troubled soul, he sends the Spirit into his heart, communicating feelings of "love, and joy, and peace," and thus assuring him that God is reconciled. This may be further illustrated. You are angry with your

neighbor ; you know it by your feelings. Explanation follows, and your anger subsides ; you are immediately conscious of it, your feelings testify that your anger is gone. Apply this to the case before us. Convinced by the Word and Spirit of God, the sinner feels the enmity and wickedness of his heart, becomes conscious of his danger, and flies by repentance and faith, pleading the merits of the Savior, that he may obtain forgiveness. He believes with all his heart, and his pardon is sealed. Jesus speaks, "Son, thy sins are forgiven," and sends the Spirit to communicate the joyful intelligence to the spirit of the penitent ; and the consequence is, he becomes conscious that "old things have passed away, and all things become new."

Nor does this evidence, from its nature, leave him in doubt or uncertainty. It is, indeed, the most satisfactory evidence we can have on such a subject. The nature of the subject does not admit of mathematical demonstration, but it admits of proof equally satisfactory to our own minds, and this we have in the consciousness produced by the witness of the Spirit. The strongest evidence we can have of a diseased body, is a consciousness of pain ; and the most conclusive testimony we can have of our fellowship with God, is that consciousness of the fact, which results from the witness of the Spirit, upon comparing our feelings and experience with the standard of Scripture. And this witness, though denounced by the Campbellite as

being metaphysical and nonsensical, is in its nature so simple and plain, that the "way-faring man, though a fool, need not err." He who has it may be ignorant of the laws and operations of mind, and not able to reason logically or philosophically upon any subject, consequently, sophistry may silence him, but it will never be able to shake his faith, while conscious of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. While the formalist endeavors to "hope against hope," that he has "a hope," and the Campbellite vainly strives to predicate an assurance of pardon upon his baptism, the man who possesses the witness of the Spirit has an evidence entirely satisfactory, and one which comes within the grasp of the most ordinary capacity. Not long since, a native African, whose humility and piety are proverbial where he is known, observed to a minister, that he was baptized in Africa, and that he loved God in Africa. The minister inquired, "how do you know you love God? Do you infer this from your baptism? The reply was, "O no! Me *know* me love God. Me *feel* me love God." We do not mention this to prove the truth of our doctrine, but to illustrate the nature and character of that evidence, which God has given to establish our adoption, and impart substantial peace and comfort to the mind; an evidence so simple, and yet so comprehensive, that while it meets the case of the ignorant savage, it is equally adapted to the soaring intellect of a Newton, a Locke, or a Bacon.

From the whole, we feel satisfied with the doctrine of assurance, as taught in the Scriptures, and received by the great and good of past ages, and the present day; and if, for this, we continue to be charged with fanaticism and enthusiasm, we are in too much good company to be put out of countenance. The witness of the Spirit with our own spirit, forms the only tribunal established in the Scriptures to assure us of pardon. They have never authorized us to infer this, by referring to the time and place of our baptism; but their language is, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God." "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself." This host of testimony will surely be sufficient for the candid, unbiassed reader. Let him who rejects it, take care lest he wrest the Scriptures to his own destruction.

In taking leave of the present topic, we would say, that fairness and candor with our opponents, have been our aim, so that we are not conscious of having written one sentence, "which dying, we would wish to blot." In stating their views, recourse has been had to the writings of Mr. Campbell, and to the teachings and practice of the accredited leaders of his party; from which we learn that they consider



immersion the "one thing needful," the means of obtaining pardon, and the evidence of pardon. From this caricature of christianity, our feelings and judgments revolt. Observation upon its practical effects, long ago, convinced us, that it is deleterious to the existence of personal piety, and practical godliness, engendering strife, and pride, and vain glory. If so, it is destructive of souls, and every good man ought to oppose it. A religion that "plays round the head, but comes not to the heart," an experience that begins in the water, and ends by coming out of it, may answer while we are in health, but will fail in the hour of death. If they would baptize the penitent "for remission of sins," and then tell him to "ask," "seek," and "strive," till he obtains the witness of the Spirit, all would be well. But no, this would be too humiliating to the pride of man. An easier plan, one that will take with those who will not submit to so much humility and self-denial, must be substituted. And hence, *seeking* is pronounced unscriptural; *praying* for remission of sins, and for the Holy Spirit, is made a theme for mirth; and *striving* "to enter in at the strait gate," (especially in coming to the mourner's seat,) is almost as bad as pagan idolatry; and immersion is made the *sine qua non*, the indispensable every thing. The result of which is, that in the minds of many, the blood of the Redeemer, the witness and operations of the Spirit, the duty of prayer, and holiness of heart and life, are virtually washed away in the water.

## CHAPTER IV.

## MODE OF BAPTISM.

Import of the Greek word BAPTIZO—import of the phrases *In Jordan, going up out of the water*,—Baptism at Ænon—Consideration of Rom. 6. 3-6. and Col. 2. 12—reasons for baptism by sprinkling—those baptized on the day of Pentecost—the jailor—St. Paul—Cornelius—Reasons against immersion—Baptism of the Spirit—concluding remarks on the mode.

IN opposing Mr. Campbell's views of the nature and design of baptism, we have said nothing about the mode. Our object has been to show, that the saving virtue he attaches to the ordinance is unscriptural, without seeming to question the correctness of his assumption, that immersion is indispensable to the performance of that ordinance. Leaving it for our readers to determine how far we have succeeded, we shall now invite their attention to a different view of the subject, by endeavoring to demonstrate that the claims he sets up for the immersed on the ground that they only are baptized, are about as modest and as well founded as those of the grand Turk, who assumes to be lord of the whole earth, while destitute of the power to save his own person from the hand of the assassin.

That the mode of baptism has been a fruitful source of controversy among christians, is known to us and to most of our readers. Upon

it so much has been said, and so many volumes written, that we have not the vanity to suppose we shall be able to travel an unbeaten road, or to claim originality for our arguments. Indeed, we should have said nothing on the subject, but for the "great swelling words" of Mr. Campbell and his followers, and the fear that our silence might be construed into a tacit acknowledgment of the justice of their assertions. To avoid this imputation, and with the hope of benefiting those who may not have time or inclination to peruse works in which this subject is thoroughly investigated, we propose to take a brief survey of the ground of the ultra immersionist, and offer some reasons for dissenting from his conclusions.

The first argument commonly resorted to in support of immersion, and in opposition to every other mode, is predicated on the meaning of the original word. And here it is well known, that Mr. Campbell has assumed the responsibility of settling the question, by the summary method of translating the term in accordance with his own notions. In his garbled and deformed Testament, palmed upon the public as the production of Dr. Doddridge, and others, **BAPTO**, and its derivatives are uniformly translated in the sense of immersion; and in justification of this daring procedure, he asserts in a note in the same book, concerning the word **BAPTIZO**, that "all lexicographers translate it by the word immerse, dip or plunge; not one by sprinkle or pour." All this, we are aware,

can do no harm to the intelligent, who will be at the pains of examining the matter for themselves, for they will at once see that the assertion is untrue, and that the translation, at least, is questionable ; but others who have not the means of detecting the fallacy of this course, may be deceived by it, as doubtless many have been. 'Those who are ignorant of the original, and of the opinions of the learned, and have confidence in Mr. Campbell's ability and integrity, will be naturally led by his translation and bold assertions, to conclude that the original word means immersion, and nothing else. But neither this conclusion nor the assertion, that all lexicographers have so understood it, is founded in truth. It may be true, that all lexicographers and all linguists, have considered immersion as one meaning of the original term, but it is not true that all, or that many of them have viewed it in this sense only. Parkhurst, says, it means "to immerse in, or *wash with* water, in token of purification from sin." According to Ainsworth, "to baptize, is to wash any one in the sacred baptismal font, or to *sprinkle* on him the consecrated water." And with this opinion Ewing's Greek and English Lexicon, Calmet's Dictionary, and most persons of reputable attainments in Greek literature agree. With these facts before him, the reader will place a proper estimate upon the sayings and doings of him, who can deliberately aver that all the learned have so translated the original as to confine it to immersion.

Every man who has an acquaintance with the Greek language, sufficient to enable him to learn the meaning of a word by the use of a lexicon, may know if he will take the trouble to examine, that BAPTIZO, with its kindred terms, is so variously applied, that no one word, to the exclusion of all others, can explain its meaning. Perhaps it was originally used to express ting-ing or colouring ; and hence Homer, long before the Savior appeared in the world, speaks of a lake being baptized with the blood of a frog. In this sense it was not used to designate the manner or mode of the process, but the act of coloring, or the condition of the object acted upon. When this term came to be applied to other purposes, we find the Greeks using it to denote all kinds of washing, and every mode of purifying with water, and this is the sense in which it is uniformly used by the New Testament writers. Even if it were true that BAPTO means nothing but immersion, it would not follow that the New Testament term, BAPTIZO, a derivative of the former, signifies the same. Derivatives of this class imply less than their primitives, and in many cases materially change the sense. But it is not true that BAPTO in all instances implies immersion. In the book of Daniel, iv, 33, we read that Nebuchadnezzar “was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was *wet* with the dew of heaven.” The word *wet* in the Greek of the LXX is BAPTO: “His body was *baptized* with the dew of heaven.” Here then, according to

the original import of the term, a man is baptized by the sprinkling of dew upon his body ; and hence, if it means the application of water in one mode, and only one, we have the most positive proof that that mode is not immersion, but sprinkling. But we place no reliance upon this in determining the manner of administering baptism as a religious ordinance, and have only adduced it to show the folly of attempting to confine the word, in its original import, to immersion.

As already remarked, BAPTIZO and its derivatives in the New Testament, are used to denote all kinds of washings, also the various ceremonial purifications practiced by the Jews, some of which are well known to have been mere sprinklings. Some people seem wholly unable to comprehend how pouring and immersion can both be baptism ; but St. Paul, Heb. ix, 10, speaks of “ divers washings ” (in the original *baptisms*,) as existing among the Jews, which, by reference to Numbers xix, 7-19, are shown to have been performed both by dipping and sprinkling. We read, Mark vii, 4, that the Pharisees held to “ the washing (in the Greek, baptizing) of cups and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables,” or “ beds ” as it stands in the margin. As all persons hold to the baptizing or washing of such utensils for the purpose of cleansing them, it is quite probable from the nature of the charge, that the practice of the Pharisees originated in superstitious notions of purification ; but be this as it may, it is certain

that these things were not all baptized by immersion. The "cups and pots" may have been dipt in the water, but who can imagine this of their "tables or beds?" These were constructed of sufficient size to accommodate them at their meals, which they ate in a reclining posture, and for from three to five persons to lie down upon at their ease. Surely no person can be so extravagant as to suppose it was the custom of the Pharisees, to carry these out and immerse them in the water before their meals, or on any other occasion. But the couches were baptized as well as the cups and pots; and while it is by no means certain that the latter were immersed, it is quite certain that the former were not.

Many other examples might be adduced, but these are in point, and amply sufficient to show that the attempt to substitute *immersion* for *baptism* is not authorized by the original. Indeed, the meanings of the original are so numerous, that nothing from thence can be proved concerning the primitive mode of baptism; and though the controversy on this ground has been carried on to weariness, it has been, and always will be pretty much in character with the poet's picture of the three men, who quarrelled about the color of the chamelion. In proof, take the following summary, embracing only a portion of the meanings of this accommodating word. The verb **BAPTO** with its derivatives, signifies to dip the hand into a dish, Matt. xxvi, 23; to stain a vesture with blood, Rev. xix, 13; to wet

the body with dew, Dan. iv, 33 ; to suffer and die, Mark x, 38; to paint or smear the face with colors; to stain the hand by pressing a coloring substance ; to pour water upon the hands ; to be drunken with wine ; to sprinkle with water; and to immerse wholly or partially in water. Its application in some of these cases we have previously shown, and are prepared to produce examples of its use in all the others, and many more, whenever it shall be necessary. A word then of such extensive application, affords as strong proof for sprinkling or pouring, as for immersion, and to say that the former is not baptism is as unjustifiable, as to say that the latter is not, Mr. Campbell's translations and assertions to the contrary notwithstanding.

The truth is, the term immersion, is not found in the Bible ; nor is there any word in the original Scriptures having any connection with baptism, that would authorize, exclusively, the word immersion as its translation. We do not expect Campbellites, who know nothing of the matter, to believe this assertion ; and some of them who have the means of learning its truth within their reach, we fear, have too much faith in the *ipse dixit* of their leader, to receive any thing that would cross his track, though proclaimed by an angel from heaven. Many of his followers, so soon as they have read his New Testament and Millennial Harbinger, become in their own estimation, linguists and critics ; and some, while destitute even of a knowledge of the Greek alphabet, do not scruple to assert in



the presence of hundreds, not only that BAPTIZO means immersion, and should always be so rendered, but that it is the only word in the Greek language that can be used in this sense. We do not know that Mr. Campbell has ever authorized the latter part of this assertion, but we do know that that, as well as the former, has not the authority of truth. The Greek words *DUNO* and *DUPTO* may be properly confined in their translation to the idea of immersion; but they, so far from being used to define the mode of baptism, do not occur in the New Testament; while BAPTIZO, as already shown, cannot with any propriety be restricted to that meaning.

Indeed it is doubted whether this word in any case, where the rite of baptism is designated, necessarily means immersion; because the various purposes to which it is applied, render it evident that it does not express the manner of doing a thing, whether by immersion or pouring, but only the thing done; that is, washing, or the application of water in some form or other. And here we have sufficient ground for considering baptism as valid, whether performed by affusion or immersion; and good reason for rejecting any effort to translate the word so as to determine the mode. Should it ever be translated by a competent individual, free from sectarian bigotry and selfish partyism, the rendering will probably be, *to wash or wet with water*; but this would leave the question of the mode, where it is at present, and where we believe the Almighty designed it to remain,

to be determined by circumstances, and the consciences of those concerned. It has been seen that the rendering we here suppose is used in the case of Nebuchadnezzar—baptized, *wet*, with the dew of heaven—and we are confident it comes much nearer the original than Mr. Campbell's, and probably as near as any that could be given. For illustration: The mistress of a family commands her servant *to wash*, or *wet* her hands, as preparatory to the discharge of some duty. Whether the servant immerse her hands, or pour water upon them, is an unimportant circumstance—the command is obeyed whenever they are brought into the condition required. Again, I observe, *my handkerchief is wet*. Does this language tell you whether it has been dipt in the water, or left in the rain? Certainly not. It simply declares the condition of the article, and makes no allusion to the manner of producing it. Now let the original term be understood in this light, and the mode of applying the water of baptism, so far as the force or meaning of the word is concerned, will no longer be a bone of contention among intelligent christians. Had the Savior intended to enjoin either immersion or affusion exclusively, and in all cases, it would have been easy to use terms that could not have been misapprehended; but as he chose to employ words of a different character and designed the adaptation of the institution to every climate, and to all circumstances, it is reasonable to suppose he had no wish to make the mode of applying the water

an important consideration. This much, at any rate, is certain, the force of the original language does not fix the mode; and consequently, any effort to settle this matter by a new translation, whether it be the offspring of ignorance or vanity, or originate in a desperate resolve to found a sect, ought to be discountenanced.

Having shown, that the import of the word in the original, gives no authority for the exclusive immersion translation, we proceed to notice another class of arguments adduced in support of the same cause. As BAPTIZO may be, and sometimes is, used in the sense of immersion, we readily admit that it might be so connected with circumstances and qualifying terms, as to confine its use, in a religious ordinance, to that sense. And as it has been contended that the circumstances recorded in the New Testament, as connected with the performance of baptism, are of this character, and do thus determine the mode, we ask the reader to accompany us while we inspect those cases. They are neither numerous nor difficult of examination. If they contain evidence of immersion, we shall soon find it.

In the third chapter of Matthew we read that John baptized "in Jordan;" and this has, by some, been thought to be conclusive proof that he immersed. But it is more likely that "in," is here used to denote the place where he baptized, or the water with which he administered, than to point out the manner or modes of the ordinance. The same Greek word here ren-

dered *in*, is translated "*at*" in more than one hundred places in the New Testament, and "*with*" in a hundred and fifty others.\* Therefore, in this passage it may only mean, that John baptized *at* Jordan, or *with* the water of Jordan.

Further evidence is claimed from the same chapter, in the declaration that Jesus when he was baptized "went up *out of* the water." But it is easy to show that this, so far from proving immersion in his case, does not even prove that he was in the water. APO, the original word here rendered "out of," frequently means *from*, and is so translated in this chapter. John says to those who came to him, "who hath warned you to flee (APO) *from* the wrath to come." This translation is here unquestionably correct; for as the "wrath" spoken of had not then come, they were not in it, and consequently could not flee "out of" it. But it was coming, therefore they could flee *from* it. In this case, then, it is clear that APO means *from*; and in the other case we do no violence to the word, or to any thing in the context, by reading that "Jesus when he was baptized, went up *from* the water." And as he could do this without so much as wetting his feet, it furnishes no evidence that he was immersed.

Another case of very common resort, and of

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\* See Watson's and Martindale's Dictionaries on the word baptize.

much reliance, is the baptism of the eunuch, mentioned Acts, viii; where it is said, "they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." This going down *into* the water is supposed to be positive proof that the Ethiopian eunuch was immersed. But when it is known that the preposition here rendered "into," often means only *to*, or *unto*, and is so translated in the Scriptures, every candid person will at once see, that the passage proves nothing to the point.

We pause here to notice the very disingenuous manner by which Mr. Campbell, and others before him, have endeavored to escape this difficulty relative to the original word just adverted to. They tell us if *EIS* signifies *to*, that the righteous will get *to* heaven, but not *into* it. This miserable evasion will be properly appreciated by those who are aware that the pedobaptists have not contended that the original should never be rendered "into." All that we insist upon is, that it means *to*, as well as *into*. And he who denies this, is either too ignorant, or too reckless of truth, to merit even a passing notice as a controversialist.

Great stress has been placed upon the phrases, "in Jordan," "into the water," and "out of the water," in this controversy; and some have even supposed that the man who can read them, and not be converted to the immersion theory, is either dishonest, or destitute of a mind for the investigation of such subjects. But while we know that the original terms, are so trans-

lated in other passages, as to authorize us in these to read, "John baptized *at* Jordan," "Jesus went up *from* the water," "both Philip and the eunuch went down *to* the water," we shall continue to believe, and to assert, that there is here no more proof of immersion, than of sprinkling or pouring.

But to waive all this, and to take these passages just as they stand, and allow them all the force to which they are entitled, either in classical or ordinary use, and what do they prove? Certainly not that John immersed the Savior, or that Philip immersed the eunuch. But they do prove that there is no proof of immersion in either case. In the case of the eunuch, the going "*down into* the water," is often referred to as evidence that he was immersed—as incontrovertible proof of the fact; and yet that very passage demonstrates that going "*down into* the water," and being baptized are different things; for, after they had gone down, it is added that "Philip baptized him." Therefore, as these things are separate, and the going down *into* the water, was previous to the baptism, it follows that the preposition "*into*," gives no information as to the mode of his baptism.

Previous impressions are often a great difficulty to our arriving at the truth; hence it is a settled principle in jurisprudence that the man who has prejudged the case, is incompetent to try the accused. Many who are sincere inquirers after truth, are convinced before they have attended to the evidence, that baptism and plung-

ing are inseparable, and consequently, however disposed, they are not prepared to give the case an impartial hearing. This deep-rooted impression is probably the effect of the circumstance, that the largest and most respectable denomination among the sects that practice immersion exclusively, is known by the name Baptist. This circumstance, seeing those who are called Baptists, uniformly putting their converts under the water, has a natural tendency to produce upon the minds of the multitude, the impression that *to baptize* means *to immerse*. With this notion they read the passages we have been considering, and are satisfied, not by any evidence they contain as to the mode, but because they find in them nothing to contradict their previous views. Now, could they divest themselves of the preconceived and erroneous opinion, that to baptize necessarily means to immerse; and understand it in its more proper signification, to *wash*, or to *wet with water*, every candid inquirer, would at once see that these passages contain not one particle of evidence that dipping was the primitive mode of baptism. It is true we may go down into the water and then be dipt under it; but it is equally true, that we may go down *into* the water, be baptized by pouring, or sprinkling, and then come up *out of* the water, and all without having been immersed ankle deep.

What we have said, with regard to the phrases "into" and "out of the water," we consider so plain and conclusive that no unbiased mind

can fail to admit that they do not sustain the immersion cause ; but they are so commonly adduced in its support, and considered of such force and virtue in the controversy, that we offer an additional remark. The common use of these phrases, in the every day occurrences of life, shows the absurdity of supposing them to prove immersion. From many examples that might be given, we select the following : The mother accuses her child of having been *in the water*, when she only means that it has been *at* or *by* the water, wetting its hands or its clothes ; and again, we hear her say, “ Come *out of* that water.” But this command never leads us to suppose that the child is *under* the water ; we know she only intends to call it away *from* it. It is thus seen, that the common application of these terms conveys no idea of immersion ; and why such an idea should be attached to them, when used by the sacred writers, is more than we can comprehend, and a procedure for which we have never seen a sufficient reason. Indeed, one of the passages from which the preposition “ into ” is brought to prove a case of immersion, makes it clear that it proves nothing. We read, “ they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch.” Now, if *into* means under, with regard to the eunuch, it can imply nothing less of Philip ; for it is applied equally to both. But neither Campbellites nor Baptists will admit that the latter was immersed ; and in this they concede that the passage contains



no evidence of the immersion of the former ; which is all we contend for.

The next proof resorted to in favor of immersion, is John, iii, 23, where it is stated that "John also was baptizing in *Ænon*, near to Salim, because there was *much water* there." This is one of the immersionist's strong holds. He can see no reason why John should baptize where there was *much water*, or why he should convene the multitudes at Jordan, except for the purpose of plunging his converts. But the truth is, we shall find no difficulty in assigning a plausible and sufficient reason, without supposing immersion in either case. In Judea, it is a well known fact, that springs were rare, and water scarce. That which was needed for domestic purposes, had daily to be brought from the nearest rivers and fountains, in pitchers, by the women ; which rendered the supply scanty, and entirely insufficient to quench the thirst of a multitude. John's preaching roused the country. The inhabitants of "Jerusalem and Judea, and all the region round about Jordan," came to his baptism. Where could such multitudes assemble ? Certainly not in a house, for no house would contain them. They must, then, resort to the fields or woods ; and as they would need water, not only for baptism, even if administered by aspersion, but for the purpose of drinking, it was natural for them to assemble in the neighborhood of some river or fountain. This is exemplified in the location of our camp meetings, and other large popular meetings of the present

day. Though they are not designed for immersion, nor especially for baptism by any other mode, it is found necessary to select a situation contiguous to "much water," and after all, we sometimes find numbers there suffering for want of it. In this view of the subject, we see a good reason, and very probably the true one, why John baptized in *Ænon*, and at Jordan. They were the most convenient places, in view of the wants of the multitudes, either with or without reference to baptism, and whether the mode of that ordinance was sprinkling or otherwise. But be this as it may, the conclusion drawn from this passage in favor of immersion, is an unauthorized assumption—a mere supposition; and a thousand such suppositions do not prove one truth. The "much water" of *Ænon*, never has proved, nor can it ever prove that one of John's disciples was immersed in it; or that there was there a stream or fountain of water of sufficient depth to admit the immersion of even the child. We are aware that immersionists have magnified *Ænon* into a place of "great waters;" but unfortunately for their cause, no such powerful stream, or fountain fit for the plunging of multitudes, is described in the geography of the country, or has ever been discovered by travelers. The supposition of the existence of such a reason is as gratuitous, as the proof of immersion from the passage is impossible.

We find then, that this instance, as well as those previously examined, entirely fails to serve

the cause of immersion. And these, as to the historical evidence of the New Testament, are the main dependence of that cause. In reality, they are the only passages in which the said history seems to make any approach to immersion. John's baptizing in Jordan, and in Ænon, and the baptism of the eunuch by Philip, are the only circumstances mentioned in the New Testament, of the performance of baptism at a river or fountain of water; they are, therefore, the only cases that present any thing like the appearance of immersion; and no sooner are they brought to the test of fair criticism, and sober investigation, than even this *appearance* is entirely dissipated. Where, then, are the facts to justify Mr. Campbell's translation, or his assertion, that in the days of the apostles, "no person was said to be converted to God, until he was *buried in*, and *raised out of* the water?" It is certain they are not found in the Scriptures; and hence, this assertion is worth no more than one that should wholly contradict it. Neither Mr. Campbell, nor any one else, can produce one clear case of immersion among all the persons baptized, from the beginning of John's baptism, to the close of the apocalypse.

We have now gone through an examination of the facts recorded in the New Testament history of baptism. And so far from sustaining the immersion theory, we found them utterly fail to prove the immersion of a single individual. It remains for us now to examine the supposed doctrinal allusions, found in *Rom.*, vi.

and *Col.* ii, where we are said to be buried with Christ, “by baptism,” and “in baptism.” These passages, it is true, record no fact of the baptism of any individual; nor does it appear from the context, that the apostle in writing them was giving any directions concerning the mode of baptism; but still, as our opponents assume that allusion is made to the ordinance, and insist that the “burial” mentioned, is unquestionable proof that baptism implies a burial in water, our inquiry would be incomplete without them. Now, if we shall find upon investigation that these passages have no reference to water baptism, and that they are wholly misapplied when brought into this controversy, the possibility of proving immersion from the Scriptures will be rendered entirely hopeless.

We notice first the passage from *Romans*, vi. 3—6: “Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.” In a few remarks upon this paragraph, we hope to be able to satisfy the unprejudiced reader that ev-

ery argument drawn from it in favor of immersion is inapplicable, and only proves the weakness of the cause it is called up to sustain. The most ordinary reader will discover that the above passage, in some respects, is highly figurative. The apostle had just established, by unanswerable arguments, a fundamental principle of the christian religion—the *justification* of the sinner by *faith alone*; and he is now proving that this doctrine gives no license for committing sin, and cannot lead to licentiousness of life. Hence, he anticipates the legalist, whether Jew or Campbellite, objecting to the doctrine of justification “by faith, without works,” on the ground that if it be true, we may go on to sin, and the more we sin, the more the grace of God will be manifested in our forgiveness. In view of this objection, he asks the question, “Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?” and then emphatically answers, “God forbid; how shall we that are *dead* to sin, live any longer therein?” Now, the reason the apostle here gives why true believers cannot continue in sin, is, that they “are *dead* to sin.” This *death* is unquestionably to be understood figuratively, for none will suppose him to mean the extinction of natural life; and having mentioned, in this sense, our being “*dead* to sin,” he proceeds, in the same figurative strain, to speak of a *burial*, and a *resurrection*. Nor is this all, for enlarging the figure in the 5th and 6th verses, he represents us as being “*planted*” and “*cru-*

*cified* with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed ;” and this planting and crucifixion, are effected *by baptism*, just as the *burial* is. These latter verses are so inseparably connected with the former, that the sense of the paragraph is incomplete without them. Why then do not the advocates for immersion, in quoting the passage, go forward to these, and show us a resemblance, not only between baptism by immersion, and the burial of Christ, but also between immersion, and being “planted and crucified” with Christ? There is, indeed, no resemblance between a dip, or plunge in the water, and the burial of Christ in the sepulchre ; and hence some intelligent Baptist writers, among whom are Mr. Robinson, the historian, and the Rev. Mr. Judson, missionary in the East Indies, have conceded from the entire lack of similarity in the two cases, that this text proves nothing concerning water baptism. But if it were otherwise, and the resemblance between an immersion in water, and the mode of the Savior’s burial was obvious to all, before this passage can be made to bear on the mode of administering baptism, a similar resemblance must be found between immersion and the planting of trees, and between immersion and the crucifixion of our Savior ; for all these are represented as being accomplished by baptism.

But no such resemblance can be shown ; it is, therefore, vain to predicate an argument upon this passage in favor of immersion.

To make the subject more clear, let it be ob-

served that the text before us represents four things as being done to and for believers "by baptism," viz. they are said to be *planted*, *crucified*, *dead*, and *buried*. The immersionist, seizing upon the latter in support of his theory, insists that the *burial* is to be understood in a literal sense ; and hence concludes that baptism necessarily implies immersion. But neither the *planting*, the *crucifixion*, nor the *death*, which we are said to experience, can be taken in this literal sense. No man who has not taken leave of his wits, will for a moment imagine that the believer is literally *planted* in the earth, or that he *dies* by *crucifixion*, as did the Savior. It will be universally conceded that these are to be understood figuratively. The case, then, resolves itself into this ; of *four* things, inseparably connected by the apostle, and performed by the same agent, upon the same individual, and at the same time, *three* are clearly and manifestly spoken by way of figure, and can only be accomplished in a spiritual manner. And hence, it is certainly reasonable to suppose that the other is subject to the same interpretation. He who refuses to admit this, and still contends that the burial must imply a literal burial of the body in water, outrages fair criticism and common sense, and recklessly fights with the fearful odds of three to one against him.

The absurdity of the idea that the burial here mentioned signifies immersion, appears further, from the consideration that every burial implies

three things ; namely, an agent, an action, and an object acted upon ; but on the present supposition we find in this case but two of these things, the agent and the action being the same, and making but one. Baptism we are told is a burial, and yet the apostle says we are “buried by baptism.” Hence, the burial, which is the action performed, becomes the agent by which it is performed ; and thus the advocates of this view of the subject are involved in the nonsense of saying, “we are *buried* by a *burial*.”

Should what we have said fail to convince the reader that this passage cannot be made to subserve the cause of immersion, we have another thought to present. The literal reading of the text, without a word of comment, is sufficient to confute the idea our opponents attach to it. They assume that baptism is an immersion in water : and hence conclude the burial in the text to be water baptism. But instead of sanctioning this, the apostle wholly excludes water from the subject, by declaring the burial to be made in something of an entirely different nature. “Therefore, we are buried with him by baptism into DEATH.” Now, if he had said, “we are buried into the water,” there could be no controversy on the subject, all would at once perceive the correctness of the immersionist’s theory. But since this is not the case, and finding it written that “we are buried,” not in the water, but “into death,” can any clear-headed, unbiased man,



imagine this passage to afford any countenance to immersion? We think not. For however hard St. Paul may be to be understood, he certainly did not write "*death*" when he meant *water*.

It is now obvious that this important text cannot be explained by an imaginary resemblance between immersion and the burial of Christ; for no such resemblance exists, and this interpretation involves difficulties and absurdities of the most glaring and inexplicable nature. But what then shall we conclude? That its meaning is incomprehensible? Certainly not. For though the language is figurative, the meaning is plain, and the interpretation sure. Let it be first, remarked, that the baptism mentioned in the text, is that by which believers are initiated into Christ, and become new creatures: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were *baptized into Jesus Christ*, were baptized into his death?" It is clear then, that the baptism by which we are said to be buried, is that which puts us in Christ. And, now, we have only to ascertain what this is, and every difficulty will be removed. And fortunately, the apostle on this point, in another part of his writings, fully explains himself. In 1 *Cor.* xii. 13, we read; "By one *Spirit* are we all *baptized into one body*." The body here mentioned, is evidently Christ, or rather his mystical body---the church, of which he is the head. He is the *vine*---we are the *branches*. But we are here taught, that it is not by the baptism of water,

but by that of the *Spirit*, that we are properly initiated into this body, and put on Christ. The whole passage is now clear. The baptism which the apostle connects with a burial, is that which places us in Christ; but it is "by one *Spirit*" that we are baptized into him; therefore, the baptism mentioned, is the baptism of the Spirit, producing a *death* and *burial* to sin, and a *resurrection* to newness of life.

It only remains for us to notice a parallel text in *Col. ii. 12*: "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also you are risen with him, through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." The paragraph from which this is taken, is similar to the one we have just considered, and requires the same method of interpretation. In the preceding verse the apostle had mentioned the mystical *death* of christians, by the phrase, "putting off the body of the sins of the flesh;" then, as in his epistle to the Romans, he adds our mystical *burial* with Christ, and also our *rising* again with him. But this *death* is figuratively to be understood; and hence the *burial* and *resurrection* must be taken in the same sense.

On this passage we offer one additional remark, which cuts up, root and branch, the notion that it contains any allusion to a literal burial in water. The immersionist who contends for a literal burial, contends also for a literal resurrection, and in both cases, the agent is the baptizer. By his arm alone the subject is put under the water, and by the same means is he

raised from it. But the *resurrection* mentioned by the apostle, is performed *by faith*. “Wherein, also, ye are risen with him, *through the FAITH of the operation of God*.” The Campbellite, then, understanding the Scriptures as always meaning what they say, and taking the *burial* here to be immersion, may with consistency put the subject under water, but further he cannot go. He must leave him there to be raised *by faith*, or to remain immersed till the resurrection of the last day.

Such is the revolting absurdity of the assumption we oppose, that its practical effects would result in the drowning of every individual baptized. Let its advocates act consistently, and carry it out in practice, and their converts, like angel’s visits, will be “few and far between.” But all these difficulties and absurdities are dissipated, when we take a proper view of the subject, and understand it to signify a *death* and *burial* to sin, and a *resurrection* to the enjoyment of spiritual life, not performed by *water*, but by the *Holy Spirit*.

And now, reader, we have given you the whole of those plain facts and Scripture assertions, upon which the ultra immersionist relies to sustain his doctrine. If the passages we have examined do not prove immersion, it cannot be proved from the Scriptures. And where is the evidence in these? Is it in the fact that John baptized *in Jordan*? No. For this he might have done by pouring, as well as by immersion. Is it found in the “much water” of *Ænon*?

No. For the multitudes would have needed much water, though not one of them had been baptized. Nor do we find it in the declaration that "both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water." For this involves the absurdity of supposing Philip also to have been immersed. Nor yet do we find it in the words, "buried with him by baptism into death;" because *death* is not *water*. Nor in the passage from Colossians; for if that implies a burial in water, nothing but a miracle could save every baptized person from being drowned. But the search becomes hopeless. Not one of these passages, nor all of them together, affords any proof that immersion was the primitive mode of baptism; nor does the New Testament give us any warrant to conclude, with certainty, that the apostles, or John the Baptist, ever immersed one of their converts.

In prosecuting this subject, we have now arrived at the point where it seems expedient to notice the other side of the question. Our inquiry in the preceding numbers, has been for proofs in favor of immersion. But after having traveled over all the ground, and examined with candor and impartiality, every passage in the New Testament that seems to have a favorable bearing on that view of the subject, together with the original meaning of the word, we find the question still involved in doubt and uncertainty. Not one ray of light has been discovered to offer a gleam of hope that the immersionist will ever be able to demonstrate

his system to accord with the practice of the apostles and primitive christians. If such was their practice, the Holy Spirit has left us in the dark—the Scriptures make no mention of the fact. This being the case, we turn to the other side, and offer some reasons why we believe in and practice a different mode.

In the remaining cases of the administration of baptism, mentioned in the New Testament, we have, at least, some strong presumptions against the doctrine that immersion was the primitive practice. The first persons baptized after the apostles received their commission to teach and disciple the nations, were the three thousand upon the day of Pentecost. It was the third, or according to our method of computation, the ninth hour of the day, when Peter began to preach; and after he had preached, and heard the cry of the convicted multitude, and responded to their inquiry, he then exhorted them “with many other words.” Now, all this probably brought twelve or one o’clock; and during the five or six hours that remained of the day, three thousand persons were baptized by twelve men, making two hundred and fifty to each. To suppose that one man, in so short a time, could go through the ordinary forms, and immerse this number of persons, is to suppose a moral, and we believe, a physical impossibility. To avoid this insuperable difficulty, some have imagined that the seventy disciples were present, and took part in the work of baptizing; and in addition to this, the Camp-

bellite would tell us that the converts themselves, so soon as they were baptized, were prepared to become baptizers, and thus to relieve the apostles of their burden. But we might fancy fifty other things on as good authority, and with as much probability as either of these. The account mentions Peter and "the eleven," but says not one word about the seventy; and as to the notion that every man who is initiated into the church by baptism, is authorized to administer the ordinance, it has, like most of the other peculiarities of Campbellism, no more countenance in the Word of God, than the flimsy impostures of Joe Smith, or the idolatrous pretensions of Ann Lee. We have, then, no reason to believe that any but the twelve were employed in baptizing on that occasion. But they could not have gone in search of water and immersed three thousand persons in that part of the day that remained after Peter's sermon and exhortation; it is therefore extremely improbable that there was any immersion on that occasion.

An examination of the circumstances connected with the baptism of the jailor and his family, will result in a similar conclusion. After Paul and Silas had been beaten with many stripes, they were "cast into prison;" when the jailor, being charged "to keep them safely," of his own accord, "thrust them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks." Here, let it be observed, two apartments are mentioned. The magistrates cast

them into *prison*, but the jailor thrust them into the *inner prison*. While here, Jehovah undertook their cause, and at midnight sent an earthquake that shook the prison to its foundations, opened its doors, loosed the fetters of the prisoners, and waked the keeper ; who seeing the doors open, concluded the prisoners had escaped, and was about to kill himself. But when Paul cried out, “ Do thyself no harm, for we are all here,” the jailor called for a light, sprang in, fell down before Paul and Silas, brought them out, and inquired, “ What must I do to be saved ?” And the same hour, he and his, were baptized ; and he brought the prisoners into his house, and “ set meat before them.” These are the material incidents recorded of this transaction, and if they do not forbid the supposition that the jailor and his family were immersed, we are greatly mistaken.

We are aware it is assumed by the immersionist, that the mention made of the jailor’s bringing Paul and his companion out, and taking them into his house, is proof that they went out of the prison in search of water ; but this is a supposition destitute of proof, and utterly opposed to the recorded facts and rational probabilities of the case. It has been already observed that the prison had two apartments—for Paul and Silas, after they were in prison, were thrown into the *inner prison*. It is also clear that the jailor’s house was so connected with the prison as to form a part of the same building—because the first thing he

saw on awaking out of his sleep, was the prison doors open, which he could not have seen had he lodged in a different house. Nor could he have *sprung into the inner prison*, as represented, unless he had occupied an adjoining apartment. Having premised this, we are prepared, without leaving the prison, to follow the apostle when "brought out" and conducted into the house of the keeper. He was brought out of the inner prison into that apartment in which he had at first been cast, and from thence into the keeper's house, which was under the same roof, and a part of the prison. Add to this, that after the events of the night are detailed, the history leaves Paul and Silas in the house of the jailor, where in all probability they remained the balance of the night with their new converts ; but in the morning we find them still in prison, refusing to leave it until the magistrates shall come and take them out as openly as they had cast them in. The obvious conclusion from this, is, that the keeper's house and the prison were synonymous.

But further—the jailor by virtue of his office might assign the prisoners any part of the prison which he considered most suitable ; but out of it he could not take them, without betraying his trust, and violating the authority under which he acted. And certainly we cannot suppose this of a public functionary, in entering upon the duties of that religion which teaches subjection to "the powers that be." Nor is this all. The supposition that he had



gone out to baptize the jailor and his family during the night, is wholly irreconcilable with the apostle's reply to the magistrates in the morning. When they sent word to the jailor to let the men go, Paul replied, substantially, we are here *in prison*, where they cast us openly, though we had committed no fault, "and do they now thrust us out *privily*? Nay, verily," we will not go out thus, "but let them come themselves and *fetch us out*." Thus he manifested a consciousness of the rectitude of his own conduct, and an acute sense of fitness and propriety. "They cast us in prison without sufficient cause, and in prison will we remain until they come and take us out." But how does this noble daring, in refusing to leave the prison till brought out by those who had cast him in, comport with the idea that he had previously been out to immerse the jailor? Just about as well as light agrees with darkness, or the Bible with Campbellism. Such a supposition charges St. Paul with a duplicity unworthy his character—a hypocrisy entirely repugnant to the principles of that religion for which he laid down his life. The apostle, then, did not leave the prison during the night. Hence, the jailor and his family were baptized in the prison; and, consequently, *they were not baptized by immersion*. We can come to no other conclusion, unless we charge the apostle with sheer hypocrisy, and imagine an event that has not even the most improbable of probabilities for its support.

Another example, and perhaps the last one we shall adduce, is the baptism of St. Paul. The history of his case makes it clear that he was baptized in a house, and in an erect, or standing position ; and if so, he could not have been immersed. But let us look at the facts.

In his journey to Damascus, Saul of Tarsus was arrested by the power of God, deprived of his sight, and in that condition conducted into the city, to the house of one Judas, where he continued three days without seeing any thing, or tasting food. In the mean time the Lord commanded Ananias to go to him, who, “went his way, entered into the house,” laid his hands upon Saul, and addressed him in the name of the Lord Jesus ; “and immediately there fell from his eyes as if it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and *arose* and was baptized.” These are the facts narrated by the inspired writer ; and so far from holding out the idea of his leaving the house to be immersed, they plainly teach the contrary. Every unprejudiced mind, upon reading the account, will conclude that Paul was baptized in the house where he received his sight. In confirmation of this, let it be observed, that through the whole narrative, when it was necessary for the persons concerned to travel, or pass from one place to another, the fact of their doing so is mentioned. For instance, it is said that Paul “*journeyed*” to Damascus, and when he was struck down by the way, that the voice said to him, “Arise and *go* ;” and that he arose, and

“they *led* him by the hand, and *brought* him into Damascus.” Then the Lord said to Ananias, “Arise and *go* into the street that is called Straight,” and he “*went* his way, and *entered* into the house.” But when he came, he did not say to Saul, arise and *go* to the water, as in the other cases, and which in all probability he would have said, if such a movement had been necessary. His language was, “Arise and be baptized;” and the account adds that Saul “*arose* and was baptized.” If all these circumstances do not establish beyond reasonable doubt, that Saul did not leave the house till after his baptism, we can scarcely conceive it possible that any fact can be established by circumstantial evidence.

But in addition to his being in a house, we have conclusive proof that the apostle was baptized standing on his feet. In an able criticism on this passage, by Dr. Cleland of Kentucky, it is clearly demonstrated that the verb *ANASTAS*, used to denote Paul’s *rising up*, in order to be baptized, could do no more than place him on his feet, and that it properly signifies, *he stood up*. Every scholar knows that the New Testament uses it in this sense; or, at least, he may know it if he will examine. We give one example. It is written, Mark, xiv. 60: “And the high priest *stood up* [*ANASTAS*] in the midst, and asked Jesus,” &c. Now, if *ANASTAS* signifies that the high priest “stood up,” it must signify the same of Saul; and hence we have indubitable evidence that he was

baptized standing on his feet, in an erect posture. Add to this, that he was baptized in a private house—for no person from reading the history of the case, can come to any other conclusion; and he who still imagines he was immersed, must be more anxious to sustain a favorite theory, than to submit to the testimony of the Bible. To talk of immersion performed in a private house, is, indeed, sufficiently ridiculous; but to add to this, that the subject was immersed while standing on his feet, caps the climax of absurdity and impossibility.

We have now examined three cases of baptism taken from the New Testament, in which the presumption against immersion is so strong as to amount almost to an absolute certainty. The case of Cornelius and his friends, is similar in its character. It contains nothing favorable to immersion. Its probabilities lie entirely against that practice. It is not pretended that these circumstances prove what the primitive mode of baptism was; but they certainly prove that it was not immersion. In the absence, then, of any proof that either John the Baptist, or the apostles, immersed one of their converts, and with the certain knowledge that some of them were baptized under circumstances that rendered their immersion impossible, we cannot resist the belief that the primitive christians were baptized by *pouring* or *sprinkling*.

Before we close the present number, we will briefly touch a few other considerations that stand opposed to the exclusive immersion practice.

1. If God had intended that immersion, and it alone, should be the mode of baptism for his church, it is surely probable he would have commanded it, and in terms so explicit that none could doubt. But this is not the case. The Scriptures nowhere command it, nor do they give us any assurance that the apostles practiced it in one single instance.

2. If the persons baptized by the apostles were immersed, it is quite likely that the inspired writers in detailing the circumstances, would have added something about their adjourning to some river or pond in search of water. Indeed, upon the immersion theory, we can scarcely conceive it possible that among all the cases of baptism recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, no mention should be made of their going to, or being at some stream or fountain. But the accounts give no intimation of any thing of this nature. Among all the persons therein mentioned, the eunuch is the only one said to have been baptized at a stream or spring, and this was a mere casual circumstance. While pursuing his journey, he heard the sermon under which he was converted, and was then baptized with the first water he found on the way. He did not go there in search of a suitable place to receive the ordinance; nor is there the least hint of such a procedure in any other case. Wherever the meeting was held, and in whatever place sinners professed faith in Christ, *there*, and immediately, were they baptized. No delay, in order to prepare

suitable apparel—no retiring from the place where converts were made, in search of suitable and sufficient water is mentioned; but on the contrary, the facts, as given to us, convey no other idea, than that each was baptized forthwith, and in the very house where he heard and believed the gospel.

3. If the efficacy of baptism depends more upon the frame or state of mind in which it is received, than upon any external circumstance, it is not probable that a mode unfavorable to devotional exercises would be required. That baptism does require this state of mind, is admitted, even by Mr. Campbell; for he insists that the subject must have faith, or his baptism will not avail. “If he believe not the gospel, he is, to speak after the manner of men, still-born.” So says the oracle of Bethany; and in this he concedes that baptism in order to be effectual, must be received when the mind is properly exercised. But immersion, in its practice, is wholly unfavorable to the exercise of that faith which takes hold upon the Savior. It often produces shivering, sobbing, and other unpleasant sensations, that must distract the thoughts, and entirely unfit the mind for a collected performance of a solemn act of devotion.

4. It is not probable that a religion designed to be universal, would require any thing that is not practicable in all countries, and under all circumstances. But immersion is neither. In the higher latitudes, and at times in the temperate, the cold is so intense that it cannot be

performed ; and often in the case of sick and delicate persons, its practice is wholly inadmissible. Indeed, with all the caution that is used, the loss both of health, and of life, has sometimes occurred.

And, finally, it is extremely improbable that a religion whose nature is purity and holiness, should have enjoined the performance of any thing indelicate. But the immersion of women by men, and in the presence of crowds of men, is, to say the least of it, of questionable propriety. With all the arrangements of modern times, in providing changes of dress, and suitable apparel, so as to give the least possible offence to delicacy, immersion is not a decent practice. We have no recollection ever to have witnessed the performance of it, where females were concerned, without having ocular demonstration of the truth of what we assert ; and it is doubted whether, with all the advantages of fit apparel and modern regulations, any female submits to it who has not a previous struggle with her delicacy. To suppose, then, that the apostles, at a time when no such accommodations could be had, were constantly, wherever they went, immersing men and women, in pools and rivers, in the presence of many spectators, and they, sometimes, unbelievers, is more than rational credulity can submit to.

From all which, we conclude, and it is our firm belief, that immersion was neither commanded by the Savior, nor practiced by the

apostles ; but originated in the efforts of men, who vainly thought they could improve the ordinances, and mend the institutions of the church.

In addition to the presumptions and strong probabilities against the immersion theory presented in our last, we would now offer an argument of a different character, and one which in our judgment is conclusive in favor of aspersion or pouring. We refer to the mode of baptizing when Jesus Christ was the administrator. It is true he did not administer the baptism of water ; but there is another baptism recognized in the Scriptures, and which, though ejected by the deformed and spurious christianity of Mr. Campbell's creed, is far more essential than any outward ordinance. When this baptism is to be performed, the Savior himself becomes the administrator, by *pouring out*, or *shedding forth* his Spirit upon the subject ; and thus, by example, instructing his ambassadors how to proceed in administering the baptism of water. We do not suppose that this fact will have the same effect upon the minds of all others that it has upon ours ; nor are we disposed to censure either the head or heart of him who shall still adhere to immersion. But to us, the circumstance mentioned is entirely conclusive, and seems sufficient to put this long disputed subject for ever at rest. The New Testament contains no evidence that baptism, in any instance, was administered by immersion ; but it records many cases of baptism by



pouring. The baptism of the Holy Ghost, which every christian must receive, is uniformly represented as being performed in this manner; and believing this circumstance to throw more light on the primitive mode of baptism than any thing else found in the Scriptures, we will devote particular attention to its examination.

But that the argument about to be presented may be understood in its full force, it will be necessary, first, to consider the object or design of baptism, so far as its representative or symbolic character is concerned.

As a religious ordinance, baptism is a sign of regeneration, pointing out the cleansing of the soul from the pollution of sin, by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In proof that this work in the soul is ascribed to the Spirit, the Scriptures are clear and decisive. Let one passage suffice. Paul says to the Corinthians, "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and *by the Spirit of our God.*"—1 Cor. vi, 11. Here the justification and sanctification of the believer are unequivocally declared to be effected "by the Spirit of our God;" and it is equally clear that the same Divine authority, denominates this work a baptism; "for by one Spirit," says the apostle in the same epistle, "are we all baptized into one body." This is the baptism which constitutes us strictly and properly the disciples of Christ; and the baptism of water, by which we are externally and nominally set apart for his service, is the sym-

bol of the other—representing the baptism of the Holy Ghost, by which we are made, in reality, “new creatures.” In the natural world, water is used to purify or cleanse from external defilement; and hence the propriety of using it, in baptism, to signify the work of the Spirit, which cleanses the soul from the pollution of sin.

This natural meaning of the ordinance is obviously to be inferred from the Word of God. The baptism of John had special reference to that of the Holy Spirit, which was to be administered by Christ, who should come after him; hence, while he was *baptizing* with water, he directed them to believe in the Messiah, who should *baptize* them “with the *Holy Ghost* and with fire.” For this reason, we find the apostles frequently mentioning baptism in connection with the “gift” and influences of the Spirit; and, hence, also, the language of the Savior to Nicodemus: “Except a man be born of *water* and of the *Spirit*, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” Here we have the baptism of *water* so connected with the Spirit, in relation to the kingdom of God, as fully to warrant the conclusion that the former is intended to represent the latter. To be baptized with water, is to enter formally into God’s visible kingdom; to be baptized with the Spirit, is to enter into his spiritual or invisible kingdom. And as circumcision, under the old dispensation, was a sign of the circumcision of the heart; so baptism, under

the new, is significant of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Other and stronger arguments might be adduced ; but to enter fully into this subject was not our design, nor would it comport with our limits. The considerations already presented must, therefore, suffice. But before we proceed, it may be necessary to notice another opinion in relation to this subject.

It is generally believed by the advocates of immersion, that baptism represents the *death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ*. This opinion, in addition to its total lack of Scripture for its support, is liable to other serious objections. The New Testament recognizes but two rites or sacraments, baptism and the Lord's supper, as binding upon christians. The Lord's supper is a memorial of the sufferings and death of Christ, in the work of redemption. "As oft as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the *Lord's death* till he come." It is certainly not reasonable to suppose that baptism is significant of the same thing. We can see no use in having two rites to represent the same transaction, even if they were somewhat similar in character ; but when we consider the vast dissimilarity between baptism and the Lord's supper—that the elements of the one is *water*, and of the other *bread and wine*—that the former is to be administered but once to the same individual, and the latter to be frequently repeated—it is the height of absurdity to imagine that both are

emblematic of the same event. As one of these ordinances certainly points out what Christ did for us, in dying for our sins, and rising for our justification, it is quite reasonable to conclude that the other represents what he does in us, by his Spirit, in purifying to himself a peculiar people. To suppose both sacraments to be significant of the former, while the latter has no representative, involves a manifest absurdity. From all these considerations, it is obvious that the great use of the baptism of water, is to represent the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and as the celebration of the Lord's supper to signify the work of regeneration, would be a plain perversion of that ordinance, it follows that baptism, when administered to represent the death of Christ, is also a perversion.

And, now, having seen that water baptism is an emblem of spiritual baptism, we proceed to present the argument mentioned in the first paragraph of this number, drawn from the fact that the baptism of the Spirit was always administered by pouring. The *pouring out* of the Spirit is, in the language of Scripture, uniformly called baptism; the inference is, therefore, irresistible, that the *pouring* of water, is also baptism; and this inference assumes the form of certainty, when we consider that the ordinance of baptism is an emblem of the baptism of the Spirit.

To evade the force of this argument, some have assumed that the Scriptures only mention the baptism of the Spirit in a figurative sense, and hence they conclude that it can prove noth-

ing concerning the mode. We once heard a teacher, who is considered a modern Hercules, on account of his zeal for the destruction of those serpents—creeds and sectarianism—and his labors to spread the gospel of A. Campbell, descant nearly an hour on this point. He stated that our language was necessarily figurative; because we have more ideas than words. This discovery of the numerical preponderance of ideas over words, whether original with him, or learned from Mr. Campbell, was entirely new to us; and as the English language contains about seventy thousand words, we were quite puzzled to conjecture how the discovery had been made, that English men possess more than that number of ideas. The truth of the discovery, however, seemed somewhat problematical, especially in relation to the speaker himself; for though he appeared to have plenty of words, and even to understand the art of manufacturing new ones when necessary, his ideas were neither numerous nor brilliant. But whether true or false, it answered his purpose, which was to show, what no one doubts, that there is such a thing as a figurative use of language; and hence he took occasion to assert that when the pouring out of the Spirit is called a baptism, the term is used in a figurative sense, and consequently can have no weight in determining the mode of administering the baptism of water.

But this was a mistake. The conclusion is not warranted by the premises assumed. When

figures are introduced they must have some resemblance to the things signified. Figuratively, we say a man is immersed in debt. This does not mean, it is true, that he is literally covered with debts; but it does mean that his debts are so numerous as to cover the value of his property; and hence immersion is a fit representation of his situation. Again; a painter draws the figure of a house, and though he does not intend it to be literally a house, he intends it to be as much like one as possible. And so of all figures, and figurative language. Unless the figure bears some resemblance to the thing signified, it can in no proper sense be said to be its figure; and, therefore, the figure of baptism, whatever it may be, must resemble baptism.

Now it matters not for our present purpose, whether the descent of the Holy Ghost be denominated baptism, in a figurative sense, or whether the baptism of water be designed to represent that circumstance. In either case, the conclusion is the same; for the figure must have some similarity to the thing signified. Every Bible reader knows that the *pouring out*, or *falling* of the Holy Spirit upon the people, is called baptism. If the term here be used only figuratively, it follows that the action to which it is applied, resembles the ordinance from which the figure is derived; and if the rite of baptism be considered as a symbol of the descent of the Holy Ghost, it will not vary the result. Either way the resemblance must

exist. But where is the resemblance between immersion and the baptism, or pouring out of the Spirit? It cannot be found, for it has no existence. Immersion, therefore, in this respect, wholly destroys the significancy of baptism, and renders it an unmeaning ceremony; while *pouring* retains the analogy between the sign and the thing signified, and is clearly emblematic of the washing away of the guilt and pollution of sin by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit—the only thing of which the Scriptures make baptism an emblem.

We will now present the argument more in detail, by noticing a few passages of Scripture that are directly in point. When John was baptizing in Jordan he said, “I indeed baptize you *with* water; but he that cometh after me shall baptize you *with* the Holy Ghost and with fire.” Similar to this is the language of the Savior to his disciples, recorded, Acts, i. 5: “John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.” In both of these passages the term baptism is applied to the giving of the Spirit, as clearly as it is applied to the ordinance which John administered; and as these two pass under the same name, the best method of determining the proper mode of administering the ordinance, is to ascertain in what manner the baptism of the Holy Spirit is described in Scripture. This is certainly a correct course. Two actions are called by the same name—we have no certain knowledge of the manner of

the performance of the *first* ; if therefore, we can discover how the *second* was done, it must be decisive in determining the mode of the other.

And here we are not left in the dark. The Scriptures tell us in the most positive manner that the baptism of the Spirit was administered by *pouring out*, or *falling upon*. In the history of the fulfillment of the prophecy, that Jesus should "baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire," we have not only the fact that he did baptize his disciples, but, also, the most unquestionable proof that that baptism was by *pouring*. This event is recorded in the 2d chapter of Acts, where it is said, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of *fire*, and it *sat* upon each of them ; and they were all filled with the *Holy Ghost*." And Peter stood up in the midst and said, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel, and it shall come to pass in the last days, saith God, I will *pour out my Spirit* upon all flesh." That this was the fulfillment of the prophecy of John the Baptist, and of the promise of the Savior, concerning the baptism of the Holy Ghost, is rendered entirely certain by the language of Peter on another occasion. When giving an account of his visit to Cornelius, he says, "And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost *fell* on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how he said, John indeed baptized with water ; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost."



Acts, xi. 15, 16. Two things are plainly taught in this passage. 1. When the Holy Ghost *fell* on Peter's hearers, he considered it baptism; for it caused him to remember the word of the Lord, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost." 2. When he says that the Spirit "*fell* on them, as on us at the *beginning*," he evidently refers back to Pentecost; and by alluding to the promise the Savior had given, to baptize them with the Holy Ghost, proves that that promise was then fulfilled. This, then, by the Savior, and by his forerunner John, was called baptism. But Joel prophesied that it should be administered by *pouring*, and Peter tells us it was administered in this mode. It is, therefore, a settled point, that the baptism of the Spirit was a *pouring out*—a *descent upon*, and not an *immersion into*. But the same word that here implies *pouring*, is used to denote the ordinance; and hence it is certain that baptism is correctly administered by pouring. "For if baptism," says Mr. Watson, "necessarily means immersion, and John baptized by immersion, then did not Jesus baptize his disciples with the Holy Ghost. He might *bestow* it upon them, but he did not *baptize* them with it, according to the immersionists, since he only '*poured* it upon them,' '*shed* it upon them,' and caused it '*to fall* upon them;' none of which, according to them, is baptism. It follows, therefore, that the prediction of John was never fulfilled, in their sense of baptizing; because, none of the disciples of Jesus men-

tioned in the Acts of the Apostles ever received the Holy Ghost but by *affusion*. This is the dilemma into which they put themselves. They must allow that baptism is not in this passage used for immersion, or they must deny that Jesus ever did *baptize* with the Holy Ghost."

All the other accounts of the baptism of the Spirit agree as to the mode, with that which was administered by the Savior on the day of Pentecost. They all represent the Spirit as coming from above, like the pouring of water upon the head. When our Lord received this baptism, the Spirit of God *descended* like a dove, and *lighted* upon him. When Cornelius and those that were with him received the same gift, it is said, "the Holy Ghost *fell* on them;" "and they of the circumcision that believed, were astonished, because that on the Gentiles, also, was *poured out* the gift of the Holy Ghost;" and when St. Paul connects the two baptisms in a manner somewhat similar to the words of John the Baptist, and our Lord, in the passages above quoted, he expresses the mode of the baptism of the Spirit in the same manner: "which he *shed* on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Lord." Thus it is seen that that baptism which the Savior administers, is uniformly administered by pouring; and as the baptism which we are commanded to administer is a symbol of the other, and should be as much like it as possible, it necessarily follows, that the pouring of water upon the subject is the correct mode of baptism.

The argument is now before our readers. The circumstances under which we have written, have caused us to present it in a crude and rather desultory manner; we will, therefore, repeat and sum up the whole in a few words.

1. Two things pertaining to christianity, and intimately connected in the Scriptures, are called by the same name—the *baptism* of water, and the *baptism* of the Holy Ghost. The Scriptures do not, either by example or precept, inform us how the former was administered; but they tell us as plainly as language can, that the latter was always administered by being *poured out*, or *shed forth* on the subject; it is therefore plain that the water, in baptism, should be *poured* upon the person baptized.

2. It has been shown that water baptism is a symbol or sign of the baptism of the Spirit; consequently, there must be some resemblance between them. But the baptism of the Spirit is always by *affusion*; it is, therefore, certain that water baptism should be administered in the same way.

3. And, finally, as there is no proof that in any instance found in the New Testament, baptism was performed by immersion; as there are so many presumptions and strong probabilities against that practice, as have been stated; and as we have decisive evidence of a designed correspondence between the baptism, *the pouring out* of the Holy Spirit and the baptism, *the pouring out* of water, we may conclude with confidence, that the latter was the

apostolic mode of administering that ordinance.

This is the conclusion at which we have arrived; and this we believe to be a true and necessary conclusion from the facts we have laid before the reader. Not that we suppose that all who may read our remarks will be led to think as we do. We know human nature too well to harbor such a thought. But we do most firmly believe, if men could and would lay aside their preconceived notions in favor of immersion, and come to the Bible to learn the truth, "as they that must give an account" for what they believe, as well as for what they do, that the facts presented in this number, are sufficient to settle forever this very exciting and unprofitable controversy.

Before we said any thing in these strictures concerning the mode of baptism, we had proved that the importance Mr. Campbell attaches to the ordinance, and the object for which he administers it, are anti-scriptural, nearly allied to Popery, and dangerous to the souls of his adherents; and now, when it is seen that his system is built, not upon the ordinance, properly, but upon a certain mode of administering it, which never can be proved to accord with the primitive practice, both he and his reformation are placed in an attitude by no means enviable. Indeed, when, in addition to this, we consider the violence with which he assails the christian world, the impudence with which he disclaims sectarianism, and the arrogance he manifests in claiming for himself and his followers the appellation of the only true

church, our risible powers would be excited, were it not for the superior claims upon our pity and our prayers.

Our remarks on the mode of baptism are now closed. We should have said nothing on the subject, but for the arrogance and presumption of Mr. Campbell and his partisans. He at the outset had palmed upon the public a spurious translation of the New Testament, which was designed to fix the mode, by giving the original a translation that should confine it to immersion; then to sustain the unwarrantable position he had indulged in assertions equally unwarrantable, and wantonly assailed the good and wise of every name, who refused to submit to his dictation, till many of the ignorant and unstable had really concluded immersion to be necessary to salvation. This reckless course gave birth to a system by which the most abandoned sinners, by a sudden *pop* under the water, and without any Divine influence, are not only transformed into angels of light, but have their mental faculties so illuminated that they know all about the Scriptures, and immediately become teachers and expounders. Hence it is no uncommon occurrence to see those who so far from understanding the original, do not know enough of their mother tongue to distinguish between the nominative case and the verb, in the plainest sentence, going about with the New Testament and the Millennial Harbinger, endeavoring to make proselytes, asserting that *baptizo* always means immersion, and with the most unblush-

ing temerity, sending to perdition all who do not follow them under the water. Such conduct merits little but contempt; and should have received no notice from us, but for the fact that their "great swelling words," and arrogant assumptions, are calculated to mislead a portion of the community, and thereby to endanger immortal souls. To contribute our mite in counteracting those evils, was our motive in writing; and for this purpose only have we concerned with the mode of baptism. We close by repeating, that neither the import of BAPTIZO, nor the Word of God, warrants the conclusion that *immersion only is baptism*; and hence the man who says to his neighbor, "you must be immersed or you cannot be a disciple of Christ," is insincere or ignorant, or bigoted, or influenced by the fell spirit of despotic intolerance which established the inquisition, and incarcerated and burnt the martyrs in the dark ages of papal Rome.

## CHAPTER V.

## CREEDS.

Campbellites profess to reject all creeds—creeds do not produce sects—those who use creeds do not equal them to scripture—uses of creeds—they shew in what sense scripture is received—they promote peace and harmony—do not prevent the free use of opinion—Campbellites have a creed.

Ever since Campbellism began to develop itself, many christians have looked upon some of its doctrines and assumptions, as too absurd to require a serious refutation. Those points to which we now invite attention, have been considered of this description; but though we have truth on our side, we may err, by placing too much dependence upon the goodness of our cause. Some one has said, “Let not the advocates of truth trust every thing to their cause and do nothing themselves, lest the vigilance of error should triumph.” Believing this advice to be founded in wisdom, and applicable to the present case, we intend to profit by the suggestion.

Mr. Campbell professes to reject all human creeds, and claims for himself and his followers exemption from sectarianism. To adduce from his writings proof of the correctness of this statement, is unnecessary. All who have perused the “Christian Baptist,” or the “Millennial Harbinger,” have discovered that these

assumptions form a leading feature of his boasted *reformation*; and all who have listened to the harangues of any of his teachers, proclaimers, or evangelists, are aware that the "hue and cry" against creeds and sectarianism, as man's work and priestcraft, are so necessary to the existence of the system that no man can be a legitimate reformer who does not chime in and dance to the same measure. To the existence of creeds and confessions of faith, they attribute all that dissension and controversy that are found among christians; and professing themselves to have no creed but the New Testament, they modestly claim to be, not a sect but **THE WHOLE CHURCH**, and invite us to abandon our creeds, and unite with them in restoring peace to the world, and in bringing in the latter-day glory. Now, all this, to an intelligent, investigating mind, acquainted with the facts of the case, is sufficiently ridiculous to furnish its own refutation. But all men are not intelligent, or at least are not disposed to close investigation where matters of religious controversy are concerned. Many take things on trust, and believe them because others say they are true; and hence the reckless and seeming confident assertions of Mr. Campbell's proclaimers, when not met and refuted, have frequently had a favorable reception, and induced some to believe that Campbellites do, in reality, reject all human opinions, and that they have less sectarianism than their neighbors. It is therefore certain, that an investigation of their claims



in reference to these points, may not be labor in vain.

We have already intimated, that Mr. Campbell attributes the different opinions and parties that are found in the christian world, to the existence of creeds; and hence, he infers that their annihilation would unite the various denominations, and harmonize the whole church. Now it is admitted that this inference is logical, and would necessarily follow, if the truth of the premises could be established. But this can never be done. In order to see the absurdity of the above position, it is only necessary for us to ascertain the cause that originated different creeds. No effect can exist uncaused.— But different creeds do exist; therefore some cause has produced them. What was that cause? Certainly, not unity of sentiment, or opinion of the church. If there ever was a time when the views of the church were of a oneness, when all its members were of the same mind, and entertained the same opinions with regard to the import of the Word of God, it is certain that that time could not have given birth to different creeds; for so long as a unity of faith continued, such creeds could not have been produced. Members of the Church must have differed in opinion before they could have expressed discordant views upon parchment or paper; and hence we discover that differing creeds originated from the previous existence of conflicting opinions in the church. To suppose, therefore, that our creeds make men to

differ, and have caused all the divisions found among christians, involves the absurdity of supposing the effect to be older and more powerful than the cause that produced it. It is thus seen that the position assumed cannot be maintained, because it has not truth for its basis; and it follows of course that the inference drawn from it must necessarily perish. Indeed, the supposition that the destruction of creeds would annihilate party spirit, and unite the various denominations of christians, argues so little knowledge of human nature and of the history of the world, that we are wholly at a loss to see how men of the intelligence of Mr. Campbell and some of his proclaimers, can believe it. Man is a fallen being—his judgment is impaired, and his understanding darkened. In this state of things, the minds of men are so constituted that they must necessarily differ in opinion. They never have beheld all things through the same medium, and in the same light, nor can they ever thus see them. Now suppose this crusade against creeds, confessions, and commentaries to be successful; imagine every thing in the shape of a creed destroyed, every book, manuscript, and pamphlet, from the writings of the ancient fathers, down to the last number of Mr. Campbell's *Millennial Harbinger*, committed to the flames, and all the party names of all the christian sects forgotten: imagine, we say, all this effected, and the Bible to be the only religious book remaining in the world.—And what, after all, would be the result? Why,

we would have to begin anew to study the Scriptures ; and in the investigation, some would arrive at one conclusion, and some at another. Some would consider them to teach that the Savior is the self-existent, unoriginated Jehovah ; others, that he is an inferior created being ; some would settle down in the belief of unconditional, universal salvation ; others would find salvation suspended upon conditions ; some would conclude that Christ died in the same sense for every man ; others that the merits of his death were only designed for the elect ; some would find the condition of the pardon of sin to be *faith* ; others would consider it *works* ; and some would find regeneration by the Holy Spirit clearly taught in the Scriptures ; while others, like Mr. Campbell and the Catholics, would refer this work to the water of Baptism. Now all these being equally sincere, and as each considers his own views both true and of vital importance, he is anxious for others to embrace them, and wonders why any one should hesitate. Here then is the beginning of strife ; and a scene of contention follows far more afflictive and disastrous than any that could arise between the different sects as they now exist, and the only way of restoring peace is to separate, and suffer the advocates of each system of doctrines to unite to preach Christ as they understand him, and worship him in that manner which they consider the Scriptures to authorize. Hence the whole would result in the formation of different creeds, and of as many sects.

In conversation with a Campbellite bishop, a few years ago, we met his suggestion that Methodists should throw aside their Discipline, with the above views, to which he only answered, "This is your opinion." We replied, very true, but it is an opinion so well founded and reasonable, that it is morally impossible the result should be otherwise; for that which has been would be again under similar circumstances. And as conflicting opinions originally divided the church into sects, and induced the formation of creeds, it is obvious that the cause must be removed before a second experiment could produce a different result. But the cause is not removed, nor can it be. Men are the same imperfect, erring creatures now, that they were in the second and third centuries. They differ in opinion and judgment, and without a miracle, must for ever differ. Until all men can be furnished with the same amount of intellect, and be placed upon entire equality in every other respect, it is impossible to bring them to think alike. It is, therefore, unquestionable, that the destruction of all our creeds and confessions, and the rejection of all party names and distinctions, would lead to much strife, and end in the formation of sects and parties, similar to the present, if not worse.

But we must notice another position assumed by these would-be creed exterminators; which is, that creeds and confessions are, by those that adhere to them, considered paramount to the Word of God. Here they concentrate their

strength, and exhaust their powers of declamation and assertion. We have heard them declare with the most unblushing impudence in the presence of hundreds, that Methodists, Presbyterians, Baptists, and all other sectarians, substitute their creeds and confessions of faith, for the Bible, and place greater dependence upon the former than the latter ! And these assertions passing for truth with the “unthinking crowd,” have doubtless left the impression upon many minds, that Campbellites only believe and receive the Bible, while all others have substituted in its stead, the works of uninspired men. But are those who make these assertions sincere ? Do they believe what they say ? In charity we are bound to suppose they do ; but this admission can only be made at the expense of the presumption that they understand what they are talking about. If they will examine the Methodist Discipline, they will find it declared that “The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation,” and are “the only rule, and the sufficient rule, both of our faith and practice.” And in this we are not singular ; our sister churches hold essentially the same views. The sufficiency of the Scriptures, as a rule of faith and practice, forms a prominent feature in the character of Protestant christendom ; and she acknowledges throughout all her ranks and divisions, “that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man as an article of faith.” What then are we to think of those, who tell us they take the *book*, and make the Bible their

guide, while they denounce all others and charge them with laying more stress upon the opinions of men than upon the word of God? We have already admitted that they may be sincere; but we did not make this admission to forestall the judgment of the reader. We leave him to determine at his leisure, whether such assertions be the fruits of dishonesty or of ignorance.

But to the mind of one who has not considered this subject in all its bearings, a difficulty may here arise: he is ready to inquire, "If the Scriptures be the only rule of faith and practice, where then is the necessity for creeds?" This question is, in part, answered already in the paragraph preceding the last; but it may be necessary to notice it further. Creeds are not intended to teach, or make known new doctrines; and consequently they do not lay claim to inspiration. They are necessary, 1st. To let the world know what those who adopt them, consider the Scriptures to teach. All who read the Bible may agree as to what it says, but its meaning is not so clear. We need not again remark that mankind cannot "see eye to eye"—that they must necessarily have different views of the same truth; and hence in reading the Bible they will receive different, and sometimes opposite impressions from the same words. The truth of this is abundantly proved by facts; for the most heterodox and absurd parties in christendom profess to derive their notions from the Bible. Look at the Unitarian, the Socini-

an, the Universalist, the Shaker and the Mormonite—all professing to believe the Bible as firmly as does Mr. Campbell; and yet contending for foolish vagaries, and semi-infidel theories, differing as widely from each other as Mr. Campbell's Testament differs from the Word of God. Now while men, sincerely inquiring after truth, continue to arrive at such various conclusions, it is obvious that the Bible, though it contains every thing needful for salvation, and is the only rule of faith and practice, is not a sufficient expose of our belief. We must receive nothing as an article of faith, that is not taught therein; but still the Bible does not show to the world what our faith is, because men understand it differently. We say we believe the Bible, and so say a thousand others, whose opinions are wholly unlike ours; and hence our doctrines are unknown, and the world knows not whether to rank us among Unitarians, or Trinitarians, Socinians, Universalists, or Campbellites. In proof, we might refer to the Unitarians of our country who reject all human creeds, and profess to take the Bible alone. To ascertain what they do believe is impossible; for we can scarcely find two of them that believe alike. Is it not clear from all this, that creeds are necessary to let others know what we understand to be the doctrines of the Bible, and that we are neither ashamed nor afraid to declare those doctrines to the world? It seems so to us. And so long, at least, as Universalists and Campbellites tell us they believe the

Bible, we shall consider it our duty to subscribe to a written creed, lest we be identified with the one or the other and thereby give countenance to their dangerous absurdities.

A second reason for adopting creeds and confessions is, that the peace and harmony of the general church may be the better preserved. This will, no doubt, appear paradoxical to Unitarians or Campbellites, who consider creeds to be the promoters of discord and strife; but we have previously shown that their assumptions here are erroneous; and there is no reason to doubt that the christian world enjoys more quietness, as now divided into sects and ranged under their several creeds, than it would do if all its paper walls were broken down, and all the discordant materials of which it is composed jumbled together. We admit that the destruction of creeds and the rejection of party names, might be productive of good, if the views of all could be brought to harmonize. But can this be done? No; we might as well expect to find all men with the same features, and of the same stature. Human nature must be remodeled, before we can rationally look for either. Seeing then, that mankind must necessarily have different views of the truths of the Bible, and that it is utterly impossible to bring them to understand it alike, is it not superlatively ridiculous to talk of promoting peace, by destroying those creeds, under which those, whose opinions are in the main, similar, are united, and by which they are partially separated from their neighbors of



opposite views, and throw them all together in a heterogeneous mass? Not even those denominations whose articles of faith have so much sameness, that they receive the appellation of orthodox, would be likely to harmonize and work well together. What then would be the result if these were compelled to unite with Roman Catholics, Unitarians, Universalists, Shakers, and Campbellites, and all others who profess to believe the Bible, no matter how absurd their notions may be? Who does not see that such a union, would be no union—that such discordant materials coming in contact would be productive of anything rather than peace and harmony? Contention and controversy would certainly follow; and experience proves that contentions are never more bitterly carried on than when they exist in the same family. “A house divided against itself cannot stand,” nor can “two walk together except they be agreed.” It is obvious, then, that creeds are necessary, and that the existence of sectional divisions is the most effectual method of securing the peace of the whole church.

It has been just stated, as an argument for the use of creeds, that men in reading the Bible cannot fail to arrive at different conclusions. This, though an obvious truth, is declared by those who war with creeds and sects, to be derogatory to the character of the Scriptures; which, they tell us, always “mean what they say,” and say their meaning so plainly that “a child of ten years old may understand them.”

How astonishing is it, then, that these same men were in the dark, and could not understand the Scriptures, till Mr. Campbell came over the great waters to enlighten them. But the truth is, such assertions are contradicted by the experience of the world. The fact that all men cannot understand the Scriptures alike, is no evidence that the Almighty failed in communicating his will to the human family. It only proves the ignorance and depravity of those to whom it was communicated. Many facts recorded in the New Testament go to prove that the disciples of our Lord, who were favored with his personal instructions, frequently failed to understand him. But are we to infer from this, that Jesus Christ was not a competent teacher? By no means. He possessed "all the treasures of wisdom;" and consequently knew perfectly what instructions to give, and the best manner of giving them. But still, those who heard his words, did not always understand him, nor always agree in their opinions. And further, Paul and Peter could not agree in all things. Paul contended that Peter was to blame; and no doubt Peter thought the same of the other. At any rate they separated, and yet they continued to be apostles; and while each went his own way, they both proclaimed the same Lord and Savior. Seeing then, that men are so constituted that entire unity of opinion, with regard to the doctrines of Christ, is impossible, is it not better for them, like Abraham and Lot, to separate under different creeds,

and preserve peace, than to continue together, and foment discord and strife?

But we are told that creeds are uncharitable and arbitrary—that they are intended to bind men's consciences, and control their opinions. This, however, is a mistake. Protestant creeds are not designed to coerce either credence or obedience. For instance, the articles of faith, received by the Methodist Episcopal church, do not compel any man to adopt them. They manifest to the world, what we consider to be the leading doctrines of the gospel, and thus serve as a rallying point where those who believe with us may meet and unite. These we cordially receive, and admit into fellowship; but those who understand the Scriptures differently, have no inducement, nor compulsion to unite with us; and we rejoice that they may find some other denomination, whose views they may adopt, and with whom they may conscientiously worship God in their own way. The same may be said of the creeds and economy of our sister churches. Thus men are not bound to pin their faith to this or that creed, any further than they may believe it compatible with the Word of God. That alone is the test of all creeds. Nor are they bound, after they have adopted a certain creed, always to adhere to it. They still have liberty of conscience, and enjoy the privilege of changing their opinions and their creed, when they choose. Hence, it is obvious, that there is nothing unreasonable or arbitrary in the existence of creeds and sects; and

that they do not necessarily cause strife, or hinder the progress of the gospel. It is admitted that between the different families of the household of faith, unnecessary and hurtful contention does sometimes exist; but it is denied that this is the legitimate and unavoidable result of their party establishments. Its origin may be traced to the erring judgments, the discordant materials, and the unholy passions that enter into the composition of fallen human nature; and as these would be the same, the strife would be far more bitter, and the consequences more disastrous, if the contending parties were more intimately connected. Sectional divisions, we repeat, do not necessarily produce contention, or retard the progress of the gospel. While under this regulation, we have the privilege of enjoying our opinions, and of worshipping God according to the dictates of our consciences, and our understanding of the Scriptures, we may, and should rejoice, that others have the same privilege. My Presbyterian and Baptist neighbors do not see as I do; but this is no good reason for our quarrelling. We are all children of the same Parent, members of the same general family, contending against the same common foes, and aiming for the same heaven, and therefore have no cause to "fall out by the way." On the contrary, our party distinctions may be the means of provoking and stimulating each denomination to "love and good works;" and there is little doubt, that this very circumstance causes more sermons to be preached than other-

wise would be, and that it is subservient to the "furtherance of the gospel."

But after all, the Campbellite, glorying in his imaginary adherence to the New Testament alone, will sneeringly remark: "All your creeds, disciplines, and confessions of faith, are man's work, and nothing more than human opinions." And this point we shall certainly not dispute about. They are human opinions; they claim to be nothing more. But they are the honest opinions of those who adopt them, founded, as they believe, upon the Word of God—an expression of their views of the Scripture, or the manner in which they understand the Bible. And have not all men opinions of their own? Is it possible for any man to read the Bible, or to hear it read, and form no opinions as to its contents? Can any one have no sentiments, or understand the Bible in no way? If so, he must be a queer genius—a perfect *unique*; and, consequently, not a very suitable person for others to pattern after. But we do not bring this charge against Mr. Campbell. We intend just now to prove that his brain is as rife with opinions and notions as most men's; and that he is not at all scrupulous about communicating them to others, so as to gain proselytes; and that he and his followers adhere as tenaciously to their opinions as those who adopt written creeds. So long then, as all men must necessarily have their opinions, where is the difference between a *written* and *verbal* creed? As it respects a man's sentiments, they are certainly the same;

but the former in openly declaring their sentiments to the world, manifest far more honesty and consistency, than the latter, who, under the garb of catholicity of spirit, profess to reject all human opinions, while they retain as much bigotry and intolerance as the most bitter sectarians.

It is now time for us to examine more particularly this Campbellite cant, which tells us, they adhere only to the Bible, and have no opinions of their own. That such are their claims, no one who has any knowledge of them will question. Who ever listened to the harangues of one of their proclaimers, or conversed with a Campbellite for half an hour upon the subject of religion, that did not hear him rail out against creeds and sects, while he assumed that he and his brethren of the *reformation*, were not sectarian, had rejected all human opinions, and received nothing but what they derived immediately from the New Testament? To convince the public of the soundness of these claims, has been one of their leading objects, from the beginning. We recollect an instance of one of their bishops soliciting the members of other churches to assist them, in preparing for an approaching popular meeting at which the presence of Mr. Campbell was expected, and the ground of his plea was that all should aid them, because there was nothing sectarian in their meetings or doings. We have often heard it iterated, as a proof of their anti-sectarian character, that they do not embrace the views of any critic, com-

mentator, divine, or creed-maker, but follow the apostles, and believe in, and are governed by the New Testament alone.

Now whether we be ignorant and blind by reason of sectarian prejudice, others must determine ; but in truth, from some cause or other, we are wholly unable to see the force of this last argument, or to admit the truth of the assumptions it is intended to sustain. Granting, for argument sake, that the Campbellites follow in the steps of no creed-maker, commentator, or expounder, does this prove them to be no sect ? Have they not their own views and opinions ? Do they not teach doctrines, establish rules, and follow practices of their own ? And do not these views and practices, which distinguish them from other denominations, stamp them with the essential features of sectarianism ? “ O no—not at all,” say they, “ for our doctrines, government, and practice, are all derived from the New Testament.” And now the whole secret is out. Campbellites receive their opinions from the New Testament, or at least they say they do, of course every thing they think to be true must be so, and every opinion that comes in contact with their notions must be man’s opinion ; and therefore they have not one particle of sectarianism about them, while all who refuse to join them are sectarians and man-worshippers. Now all this would be plain enough, but for a difficulty that is so ill-natured as to obtrude. Unfortunately for this anti-sectarian establishment, she is not alone in claiming to derive her doctrines

and usages from the Scriptures ; for it so happens, that Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and all others, from the High Church of England, down to the lowest and most insignificant sect that has attained a name in the Christian world, set up the same claim. All profess and believe their doctrines to accord with the Scriptures, as confidently as do Campbellites. Who then is to decide the question that arises ? Campbellites of course claim this privilege ; and have already decided it in their own favor, and thereby passed sentence of condemnation upon every man and woman in the world who cannot read the Scriptures through their spectacles. And still, we must not suppose that there is any self, sectarianism, bigotry or intolerance in this decision. Really there is something so preposterous in all this, that we find it no easy matter to treat it with becoming gravity. To see a *little party*, occupying the dimensions of a mere point upon the map of Protestant christendom, strutting in all the pride of imaginary greatness, assuming airs, exclaiming, “ WE are the men—wisdom will die with us—WE are Christ’s, you belong to anti-Christ—WE have the true faith and are the true church, you are deluded sectarians, following the opinions of men instead of the commandments of God.” We say, gentle reader, to see all this, is it not enough to excite the risibility of the most phlegmatic ? But we must check our mirth ; for the picture presents another aspect, upon beholding which we can-



not but exclaim, poor human nature, alas, how art thou fallen !

But in the last paragraph, we have rather digressed from our present object, and partially anticipated the subject. We will now return and notice some of Mr. Campbell's opinions, and endeavor to ascertain how far they have the force of a creed with his followers. We are aware that a full and explicit creed, setting forth the opinions of Mr. Campbell, might be collected from his writings, in his own words ; but we have not leisure at present for this course, nor is it indeed, necessary. The following items of belief, stated, however, in our own language, are found in the writings and actions of Mr. Campbell, and so far as we know or believe, universally adopted by his followers.

1. Creeds and confessions are useless and mischievous—we will have none.

2. God calls no man to preach the gospel—we will believe no man who says he is “ called and sent.”

3. The Holy Spirit has nothing to do with sinners—the Word and Spirit are synonymous.

4. There can be no christian experience before immersion—immersion alone is the act of turning to God.

5. Immersion is an institution divinely appointed for the remission of sins—no man can enjoy the peace of God or the hope of heaven, till he goes down into the water.

6. It is folly to pray for the pardon of sin—he immersed

7. Immersion, regeneration, and conversion are convertible terms, and mean the same thing—immersion is conversion.

8. The common version of the New Testament is not to be trusted—we will have a Testament of our own, that shall agree with our opinions.

It would be no difficult matter to swell the number of these articles of faith; but we have given a few of the prominent features of the *reformation*, and a sufficiency for our present purpose. Now we shall not stop to inquire, whether there is nothing of mere *opinion* in the above positions. Some of them we have examined in our preceding numbers, and found to be based entirely upon human opinion; and the others we are willing to submit to the judgment of the intelligent reader, who will be fully competent to detect the absurdity of the attempt to palm such dogmas upon the Word of God. But we would inquire, whether those who adopt the above or any thing similar, do not thereby, essentially and substantially, subscribe to a creed. We admit, that they do not, in so many words, do this—i. e. they have no instrument in writing, or in print, which they acknowledge as their creed. But what of this? So long as they receive the notions of Mr. Campbell, and look up to him as an oracle, are they not as much creed-bound as any of us? “No,” say they, “for we are not obliged to believe what Mr. Campbell writes, unless it agree with Scripture.” And so say Presbyte-

rians and Methodists, in relation to their creeds and standard writings. They are not bound to receive any thing except it be consistent with the Word of God. And if they should become so far bewildered as to reject the Bible for the *reformation* and Mr. Campbell's deformed Testament, they are entirely free to do so at any moment. Where then is the difference between Campbellites and others, in relation to this matter? It is this—the latter have the candor to avow their sentiments, and publish them to the world as such; the former adopt their own notions, or rather those of their leader, and hang to them with a tenacity very much like obstinacy, and still have the inconsistency to tell the world, “We have no creed, no sectarianism, no opinions of our own.” Perhaps there is some truth in this latter assertion. They may have no opinions of *their own*; but then it is certain they have adopted those that Mr. Campbell has manufactured for them.

## CHAPTER VI.

## SECTS—SECTARIANISM.

Mr. Campbell imitates the Pope—Campbellism peculiarly sectarian—a dialogue—Campbellites excel in bigotry and intolerance—They idolize their leader—assume the name *Reformers*—are properly Campbellites.

We hope the reader will not understand anything we have said as an apology for contention, uncharitableness or bigotry among christians. We lament the existence of these things as sincerely as does any Campbellite, and will cheerfully co-operate with him in any measure that is likely to remove them ; but till he shall devise something more feasible than his denunciation of creeds and sects, we must beg to be excused. Indeed, the clamor against sectarianism, to which Mr. Campbell has given currency, savors too much of the arrogant and selfish pretensions of the Papal See, and it is too much like the cant of the avowed enemies of christianity, to be entitled to much respect. When he assumes that his party are not a sect, but the true and only church, and condemns all who do not subscribe to his views, as the followers of anti-Christ, he does that which the Pope of Rome did long before he was born ; and when he harps upon the term sectarian, for the purpose of bringing the religious denominations into contempt, he is only walking in the footsteps

of those whose labors have been devoted to the extirpation of christianity.

With Mr. Campbell and his followers, the terms sect, and sectarian, are uniformly used in a bad sense by way of stigma and reproach. They are designed to set a mark upon those to whom they are applied, and to stamp their works with infamy. Let a man belong to any denomination except Mr. Campbell's, and his theological works, though written with the greatest ability, and manifesting every reasonable liberality of sentiment, will, by them, be denounced as worthless or suspicious. Such is their theory at least, and such their general practice. We were present, a few years ago, where several persons were conversing about Buck's Theological Dictionary. All spoke of it in terms of approbation, except a Campbellite bishop, who formed one of the company, and who, after hearing the opinions of the rest, observed with a sneer, "Buck was a *sectarian*, and the writings of all such are entitled to little confidence." Now if those who thus stamp with the seal of reprobation whatever obtains the name of sectarian, were themselves free from that which they condemn in others, their conduct would be less reprehensible; but even then we should object to that sense in which they use the term in question. It is a misapplication. The word *sect* signifies nothing more than a number of individuals associated in the belief of some common doctrines. Among the ancient philosophers we read of the Academic, Stoic, and Ec-

lectic sects, and among the Jews, of the sects of the Pharisees and Sadducees. But to none of these does the term sect imply a reproach, nor should it be so used in its application to christians.

But suppose we waive this, and admit that a sectarian is a man worshiper, and that sectarianism is worse than heathenism, and what then? Will it follow that A. Campbell is the proper person to point the finger of scorn—to “cry havoc, and let slip the dogs of war,” upon all whom he may choose to stigmatize as sectarians? Not at all, unless we invert the rule of our Savior, “Let him who is without sin, cast the first stone.” Reformation, like charity, should begin at home. We must cast the beam out of our own eye, before we can see clearly to remove the mote from our neighbor’s. And we much doubt whether any man in America is plagued with a greater *sectarian beam*, than is Alexander Campbell; and if so, he is the last man who should condemn this in others. But his sectarianism is not the worst. A man may be a strict sectarian, and still manifest mildness, forbearance, and liberality of feeling and judgment toward others. But this is not the course of Mr. Campbell; for while he denounces creeds and sects as the promoters of an intolerant and persecuting spirit, he manifests in himself, at least, as much of that spirit, as ought to fall to the lot of any good man, and much more than can be charged upon those whom he so freely condemns.

But in these remarks we may be presuming too much upon the reader’s knowledge of facts;

and he, in the absence of that knowledge, will, probably, charge us with judging harshly, and with arriving at an unwarrantable conclusion. In order, therefore, that he may judge for himself whether Mr. Campbell and his adherents, are, or are not infected with the worst kind of sectarianism, we deem it expedient to extend our remarks.

Our Lord and Savior has authorized us to judge of men by their fruits ; and if the fruits of A. Campbell's reformation do not warrant the conclusion that he is an illiberal and uncompromising sectarian, we are much mistaken. This opinion has been formed, and is now expressed, with a perfect knowledge of the fact that he pleads "not guilty." We know that his *professed* object has been to break down the partition walls that separate christians, and to drive bigotry and intolerance from the earth ; and that some visionaries have really fancied him in a fair way to accomplish this, and bring all to see eye to eye. But have these hopes and promises been realized ? Have his labors diminished the number of sects, checked party strife, or increased the spirit of love and forbearance among christians ? Just the reverse ; for he has, in his own followers, formed an additional sect, whose bigotry and intolerance are in a fair way to become proverbial ; and instead of *peace*, he has deluged many towns and neighborhoods with the bitter waters of strife.—These are the well known fruits of the *reformation* ; and if the mischief has been comparatively small, we owe it not to the forbearance

or mercy of its propagators. "Divide and conquer" has been their motto; and the universal extermination of their opponents, their object. When an individual has been so weak as to leave some orthodox church and join them, they have considered it an achievement worth publishing in capitals throughout the land; and when they have succeeded in distracting and dividing a church, it has been a subject of no little rejoicing. They have been heard to boast that they had destroyed the Baptist church in Kentucky,\* and to declare their determination to effect the same in the Methodist and Presbyterian churches. Thus, instead of promoting the peace of Zion, and establishing "good will" upon the ruins of sectarianism, Mr. Campbell's labors have resulted in the production of a new sect, so intolerant that their hand is against every man, and who, Nero like, glory in their works of desolation.

It is, however, admitted, that a man's failure to accomplish what he proposes, is not always sufficient evidence that he desired such failure; and hence, though a self styled reformer should not succeed in driving bigotry from the earth, we must not, from this circumstance, infer that

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\* We are gratified to discover that this boast concerning the Baptist church was founded in mistake. For that church, though in some places for a time, apparently trammelled and divided by the spread of Campbellism, has since risen with increased strength, as we are informed, and it is confidently believed that the Campbell fever will eventuate in her good.



he is, himself, a bigot. But we maintain that the intolerant and selfish spirit of Mr. Campbell's party is the legitimate result of his principles and practice. From the time his system of operations began to assume an intelligible form, it has embodied some ingredients, as foreign from the spirit of toleration as were the principles that originated the Spanish Inquisition. This may seem a hard saying, but we are fully convinced of its truth, and hope also to convince the reader, if he will only have patience to hear us out. And yet, in some respects, Mr. Campbell has appeared even "fierce for moderation," and liberality toward the opinions of others. We recollect to have read several of his articles in the *Millennial Harbinger*, some four or five years ago, professedly designed to point out a way for the union of all the sects. This plan, according to present recollection, proposed *that christians should cease to attach any importance to doctrines, and unite upon a belief of the facts of the New Testament*. On this ground he announced his willingness to harmonize with *Unitarians and Trinitarians, Arminians, Calvinists, Socinians, and Universalists*. "Let them," said he, "hold their opinions, but let them hold them as private property, and all will be well." Now this, indeed, appears liberal enough, and doubtless some will consider it as going a little beyond the mark; but with this we shall not, at present, concern, though we have no desire to amalgamate with Socinians or Universalists. Nor shall we dis-

pute about the importance of believing the doctrines as well as the facts of the gospel. The apostles speak of "good doctrine," of "sound doctrine," and of "the doctrine that is according to godliness," while they warn us against being "carried about by every wind of doctrine." Here, then, Mr. Campbell seems at issue with the apostles, and we leave him to adjust the matter in the best manner he can. But we would ascertain how far the above proposition justifies him in his anti-sectarian pretensions, and professed liberality of sentiment. It says, it is true, that he considers some doctrines that have occasioned much controversy, not to be worth disputing about, and that they should be no bar to christian union and fellowship; but does he extend the same liberality to all other doctrines contested among christians? To test this matter we will suppose a case. Let the reader bear in mind that Mr. Campbell avows his willingness to unite with all who believe the gospel facts, whatever their opinions may be, provided they hold them as private property; and in view of this declaration, we will suppose that a pious Presbyterian, tired of controversy, applies for admission into his communion, or for the privilege of meeting him at the table of the Lord. The following dialogue, or something like it, would ensue :

*Campbell.* Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?

*Applicant.* I do.

*C.* Do you believe that he died for our sins, and rose again for our justification ?

*A.* I do.

*C.* Have you been immersed for remission of sins ?

*A.* No : I was baptized in infancy.

*C.* That is of no value ; you must be immersed, or we cannot receive you.

*A.* Indeed ! Why, sir, you astonish me. I believe the facts of the New Testament as firmly as any man in your communion ; and I am so well convinced of the validity of my baptism, that I could not be immersed without doing violence to my conscience. But I hold my views of baptism as private property, having no wish to make them a condition of communion, or to require others to adopt them. Surely then, to be consistent with your avowed principles, you must receive me.

*C.* No sir. That matter has been already decided. You must stand aside, for until you are immersed, you cannot be a christian ; nor can we give you the least countenance as one.

The consequence here is, that the applicant is unchristianized, and repulsed from what they term the Lord's table ; and for no other reason than his inability to think as does Mr. Campbell. And this intolerant principle lies at the very foundation of the system, and is carried out through all its operations, and hence some of its adherents have gone so far as to refuse to unite in prayer with those families that would

not be immersed for remission of sins. Perhaps, though, Mr. Campbell considers immersion one of the gospel facts ; but a vast majority of the christian world think differently, and are warranted so to do, by the fact that the word is not to be found in the Bible. We have ever been ready to admit the sincerity of those who adhere to immersion as the only mode of baptism ; but after all, it is only their opinion, for the Scriptures do not inform us how the apostles baptized. They administered the ordinance "with water," but whether by sprinkling, pouring, or dipping, is at present unknown, and must forever remain so, unless the world should be favored with a new revelation. Therefore, when Mr. Campbell assumes immersion to be an unquestionable fact, recorded in the New Testament, he goes a little further than a modest man would be willing to venture ; and when he denounces those who cannot believe with him on this point, as vipers, hypocrites, and man-worshippers, and refuses to acknowledge them as the followers of Christ, he evinces the very same spirit of intolerance that established the Inquisition. "You must surrender your judgment and opinions into our hands," says the church of Rome, and so says Mr. Campbell. It is true, he cares not whether we are Arians, Socinians, or Universalists ; in this he is very liberal in his commands ; but then, we must adopt his notions of the efficacy of baptism, and receive it according to his *ipse dixit*, or he pronounces us "unpardoned, and lost to

all christian life and enjoyment." Very moderate indeed ! With much justice has an anonymous satirist represented him as saying,

" I little care what men believe,  
Provided they my faith receive,  
And come to me, with me unite,  
And think my views and plans are right ;  
And swear allegiance to the water—  
As for the rest, 'tis little matter."

This is the true state of the case. Professing great deference to the opinions of others and an anxious desire for union, Campbellites, by their conduct, say to all the world, " You must come to us, believe with us, and let us immerse you ; and then we'll unite, and peace and love shall be the order of the day." This certainly is an astonishing display of magnanimity ! Just let us all turn Campbellites, and adopt their notions and usages, and they will graciously receive us, and admit us to participate in their exalted privileges. Then, indeed, there would be no sects, for all would be consolidated into one sect. But after all, unless we are much mistaken, any of us sectarians would be quite willing to destroy sectarianism on precisely the same principle.

It is useless to pursue this view of the subject much further. A child may see the gross absurdity involved in the anti-sectarian claims of Campbell and his followers. Indeed, they have more bigotry and less toleration, than in general pertain to those whom they condemn. For the latter, while they choose to worship God

in their own way, are ready to acknowledge that they may be mistaken in their views ; and not having the vanity to suppose that christianity can subsist in no form but that which precisely accords with their notions, they extend the hand of fellowship to their brethren of other denominations ; but the former will admit no possible error upon their part, and will have no fellowship with those who cannot, in conscience, submit to their arrogant claims and nonsensical absurdities. And these are the renovators of the age, the exclusive christians of the 19th century ; without one particle of bigotry, intolerance, or sectarianism ; making loud professions of love, forbearance, and disinterestedness, and yet denouncing all who do not believe with them, and virtually saying, “ We are the whole and only church of Christ ; there is no salvation out of our communion ! ” Monstrous presumption ! As well might the prince of darkness and father of lies claim to be the fountain of light, and the author of truth and goodness.

The followers of Mr. Campbell professing to be guided by the New Testament alone, will not acknowledge any man as their leader, nor consent to be called Campbellites. And strange as it may appear, their disclaimers in relation to these matters, form no inconsiderable part of the “ reformation.” “ Others,” say they, “ are the followers of men. Methodists follow Wesley, Presbyterians, Calvin, and so of all sectarians ; therefore, they are not the followers of

Christ. But we receive no man's opinions, call no man master; Paul and Peter are our teachers, and Christ alone our guide."—And hence to be called the followers of A. Campbell, they consider a reproach upon their character, and an insult to their dignity. But why this sensitiveness? If Mr. Campbell be, as they seem to believe, not only the prodigy of the age, but "the greatest and best" among all the men who have visited the earth since the apostles left it, is it either sinful or discreditable to receive his instructions, and be called his followers?—Certainly not, provided his instructions comport with the precepts and spirit of the gospel. As professors of christianity, it would undoubtedly be criminal for us to follow any man in doctrines or in practices, which we considered contrary to the Scriptures; but not so, if after a careful examination we are convinced of their entire agreement with the letter and spirit of the Bible. If for fear of being called the followers of John Wesley, we are bound to reject those views of the doctrines of Christ which he taught, though fully persuaded of their correctness, we have no alternative, but the most downright hypocrisy. For then must we reject what we believe, and receive what we do not believe. In many instances, then, candor and honesty compel us to adopt the opinions of some uninspired man; not, however, as inspiration, but as expressing our own understanding of the doctrines of the Bible. And so far as we receive his opinions, we be-

come his followers. And where is the sin or shame of this? Is it sinful to believe with great and good men—or disreputable to confess ourselves their followers? If so, *sin* consists in the belief of the truth, and *reproach* in calling things by their right names.

There is, however, but little difficulty in ascertaining the motives that induce the “reformers” to deny their proper name; and while they almost idolize their leader, to refuse to acknowledge him as such. And we are sorry to say, that ambition and selfishness, seem to have more to do in this matter, than either moral or religious principles. We have no intention to “bring a railing accusation” against them. Mr. Campbell and his followers may be entirely sincere. We hope they are. But it cannot be admitted that all who are sincere and honest in their professions, are as truly simple in their motives. Some very sincere men are under the influence both of vanity and of ambition. It is difficult for even honest men always to understand the motives that govern their actions, “for the heart is deceitful.” But whatever the motives that induce Campbellites to deny their name and their leader, the obvious tendency of these denials has been to dupe the unwary, and thereby to form a new party in religion, of which Mr. Campbell is the head; and by which his teachers and evangelists, as subalterns under him, have obtained a little factitious notoriety. When claiming to have no leader but our Lord and Savior, and charging Methodists,



and others, with being the followers of men, they wish to make, and do make the impression upon ignorant minds, that those who follow men, and receive their opinions, cannot be the followers of Christ; and that there is an essential difference between Campbellites and those whom they denounce as man-worshipers, in reference to the confidence they place upon the opinions of uninspired men. And just so far as these impressions are produced, does duplicity prevail over truth and candor. There is no discrepancy between receiving the opinions of men in their expositions of Scripture, and following Christ as our teacher and guide. Did those men set up their opinions as a substitute for, or in opposition to the Word of God, the case would, indeed, be different. But protestant commentators have not done this. After devoting years to the study of the Scriptures, the commentator has only told us what he considers them to teach; and after we have studied them carefully, and are convinced that his opinions are correct, honesty compels us to adopt them, and thus to follow him "who through faith and patience inherits the promises," while he and we follow Christ, who "is all in all." But still we shall be asked, "How can you be followers of Christ, and of uninspired men at the same time? We would answer this question by another:—How can I be a citizen of the United States and of Kentucky at the same time? Do you say there is no difficulty in this, because the principles of the state government

are recognized in the federal constitution, upon which the union is based. Agreed; and this may serve as an answer to the first question. There is no more difficulty in the one case, than in the other.

But why should Campbellites be so anxious to unchristianize those who adopt the opinions of men, and become their followers? In so doing, do they not condemn themselves? Are they not as deeply involved in what they pronounce man-worship, as any of us? Let us examine the testimony of facts—they are stubborn things, and sometimes stand very much in the way of some men's professions. Mr. Campbell was once a Baptist; and when he commenced his "reformation," not only stood high among them as a man of talent, but to a considerable extent had their confidence. This circumstance accounts for the fact that most of his early converts, whether teachers or private members, were proselytes from that church. And consequently, they had not only professed their belief in the doctrines of the church, but according to her requirements, had given in their experiences, and professed to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit, before they were baptized. Before these could embrace the "reformation," they had to change their opinions and discard their religious experiences. But how were these changes effected? By the New Testament? Nay; but by the "Christian Baptist," and the "Millennial Harbinger," in which Mr. Campbell's views were gradually develop-

ed. Here they were taught to question, and then to deny a Divine call to the ministry ; to reject the influence of the Spirit in turning sinners to God ; to denounce and renounce creeds and sectarianism ; to believe that the Word and Spirit are synonymous ; to discard all christian experience previous to baptism ; and to teach that sins can only be pardoned through immersion. These, with many other absurdities, in direct opposition to their previously avowed sentiments, they readily received, and pronounced the “ ancient gospel ! ” It will never do to say they gathered all this from the New Testament ; because many of them had been ministers of the Baptist church for years, of course they were familiar with the Scriptures, which they tell us are so plain that a child of ten years old may understand them. But during all that time they had made none of these discoveries. On the contrary, up to the moment that Mr. Campbell discovered his new light, and invented “ another gospel,” they had contended for a call to the ministry, and for regeneration by the Holy Spirit, as necessarily preceding baptism, and often recited their own experiences in proof or confirmation of these doctrines. But no sooner did they find, that Mr. Campbell had no fellowship for such doctrines, than they renounced them too, and even renounced their own experiences—some of them marvelous enough in all conscience—which they had been in the habit of detailing for years, giving the time, place, and manner of their conversion ;

but now they discovered all this to be mysticism, enthusiasm, and nonsense. And yet these men tell us, they place no dependence on men's opinions—they are not the followers of Mr. Campbell. We doubt whether a more palpable absurdity has been attempted to be palmed upon the world, since the fable of transubstantiation was invented.

It is well known, that for the last eight or nine years Mr. Campbell has had a party of followers in the west, who have sat at his feet, and read his periodicals, till they have adopted his opinions as thoroughly as ever one man did those of another. His proclaimers have been the constant endorsers and regular reporters of his opinions. What he taught in his pamphlets, they conned over, and handed out to their hearers as the “ancient gospel;” and thus every article of their creed has been derived from him. It is true, that some of them have occasionally missed the track. Whether this was owing to their inability to comprehend him, or to his having been favored with some new light varying from the revelation of the preceding month, we know not; but in such cases, we believe, they have manifested every reasonable respect for their master, by tacking about, and pursuing the right course so soon as he has pointed it out. After having witnessed their servility in copying the sayings and doings of their leader, some have imagined that he could write nothing too absurd for them to swallow. An old gentleman once remarked, “If Mr. Camp-

bell were to declare that eating rye straw would take men to heaven, his followers would try to do it." We shall not endorse this opinion; we think it somewhat doubtful. But if there be a sect in America that follow their leader more closely than Mr. Campbell's party endeavor to follow him, we have yet to make the discovery. This we do know, that many have evinced a devotedness to his opinions, almost justifying the conclusion that they consider him infallible; for whatever he has written, they have appeared ready to receive and pronounce gospel truth, though in direct opposition to their previously avowed sentiments. In confirmation of this, we could relate a number of circumstances, some of which came under our own notice. Take the following as a specimen: When the first extra number of the *Millennial Harbinger*, developing fully Mr. Campbell's method of remitting sins through immersion, was published, a somewhat humorous gentleman, in a village in this state, got hold of it and read it before it had been circulated among his Campbellite neighbors. Resolving to try an experiment, he put the pamphlet in his pocket, and walked to a shop, where the "reformers" of the village were in the habit of meeting to enlighten each other; and finding several of them together, he listened awhile to their conversation, and then with seeming carelessness, remarked, "I understand that Mr. Campbell has come out plainly and declared immersion alone to be the act of turning to God." They at once replied,

“This is another sectarian misrepresentation—Mr. Campbell says no such thing.” “But,” said the gentleman, “suppose he should say this, would you still adhere to him?” “No,” said they, “if he were to take this ground, we could not go with him; for the New Testament teaches no such doctrine.” The way being thus prepared, the extra was produced, and several sentences read, the last of which was, “Immersion alone was that act of turning to God.” The “reformers” were silent for a moment; they took the pamphlet, turned to the title page, it was really the *Millennial Harbinger*, published by A. Campbell; they turned back to the passage that had been read, re-read it, mused a while longer, and at last one remarked, “Why, this is just what I always believed,” and so said they all. Now let not the reader be startled at this inconsistency, and charge them with falsehood. They were, we verily believe, honest men; but so blindly infatuated with their leader, that he conducted them whithersoever he chose, without their being aware of their mental servitude, or of the ridiculous attitudes in which it was placing them. And although we do not suppose that every Campbellite has manifested the same blind obedience, we do believe the above is a pretty fair specimen of the general devotion of that party, to the views of their leader. The Alpha and the Omega of their creed came from his pen. With some truths which they might have learned from the Bible, he has taught

them many errors which they never did, and never could have gathered from that source. And while they have hesitated to express an opinion upon doctrines in dispute upon which he had not pronounced, we have generally found them ready to receive his opinions, so soon as they were made known, and incorporate them as a part of the "ancient gospel." With these facts before him, the reader may determine whether they are, or are not the followers of A. Campbell.

Connected with this view of the subject is the use of party names. We have previously remarked that the "reformers" refuse to be called Campbellites, and consider the name a reproach; but since they adopt his peculiar views, and arrange themselves under the banner he has set up, is it not clear that this is their legitimate name? "No," says Barton W. Stone, "for this would argue that the parties in the Corinthian church should have been called Paulites and Peterites, which the apostle condemned." But really, we must protest against placing Mr. Campbell, or any other uninspired man, with Paul and Peter. We had suspected, even before we learned, that one of the "reformers" had prayed the Lord to bless Mr. Campbell, "the second *Redeemer*;" that some of them considered him a little superior to the apostles; but with due deference to their partialities we must demur to crowning him with any such honors. Paul and Peter did not preach to explain what they considered the

New Testament to teach. They were inspired, and as to doctrines, spoke the same things, being moved by the Holy Ghost. Their doctrines could not have raised different parties, because their doctrines did not differ; consequently, parties taking their names, must have based their existence upon personal partialities, which would, indeed, have been a species of man-worship. Their business was to establish christianity, and furnish the church with the doctrines of Christ for future generations. But now the case is altered. Christianity is established, the New Testament completed, and the name of Christ, so well known in the earth, that all his followers are called christians as a matter of course. Christian teachers do not now come, as did the apostles, to make known the will of God to man; but, according to their understanding of it, to expound that will as previously given. In doing which, they arrive at conclusions somewhat different; and hence different sects and names. And then, here comes Mr. Campbell, differing, not more from other sectarians, than from Jesus Christ and the apostles; and his followers refuse to be called Campbellites, because there were no Paulites and Cephasites in the Corinthian church. Before this argument can have any weight, they must prove that their leader sustains the same relation to the church and the world, that the apostles did. When this is done we shall admit that the position may be tenable.

After all, we expect to hear it said, "Your



party names show that you are not Christ's ; for how can you be christians, while you are called Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians ? This kind of stuff we have frequently heard, and are aware that it has had some influence in making proselytes to Campbellism, though we can scarcely conceive it possible that it could affect any but weak minds. "I'll prove," said a certain notorious "reformer," "that you are not a christian." "Indeed," said the person addressed, "where is your proof?" "Why, you are a Methodist, and can have no claims to the name of christian." "Very well," replied the other, "but by the same argument I will prove that your leader is not a man. Is not his name Campbell?" "Well, what of that?" "Only, sir, that as your own position will allow him but one name, he can have no right to the appellation of Campbell, and to that of man at the same time." The "reformer" was silent, and well he might be, for unquestionably the argument was as good in the latter case as in the former. As men multiplied, it became necessary, for the sake of distinction, to give them family names ; and the same cause produced a like result in the church of Christ. But while the whole human family are known by the general name of man, there is no inconsistency in distinguishing them by the appellations of their nations or families ; nor does it involve the least difficulty to apply to each christian sect that name by which custom has designated

it, while all are known by the universal name of christian.

But is it possible that those who make all this noise about names, can be so ignorant as not to see their inconsistency? If they called themselves Christians, and nothing else, their position, though still untenable, would appear much more graceful. But the truth is, they are not agreed among themselves, upon this point; and hence we find them giving currency to different names, some of which are as foreign from the sanctions of Scripture, as those of any other sectarians. No doubt the reason of this is, that Mr. Campbell has been rather at a loss to ascertain what name would please him best. Some years ago, he informed them that he would prefer the name of Christian, but for the fact that it had been prostituted to sectarian purposes. We believe he then hinted something about their taking the name of Disciples, also that of "Reformers;" but did not come out fully, or determine upon either. However this may be, we do know that his followers have had some difficulty in finding out their own name; that some have decided to be called Reformers, and others, Disciples; while that portion that had been inducted into the "reformation" from the old stock of Newlightism, have generally preferred the name of Christians. But amid all this the common consent of surrounding spectators has dubbed them with the cognomen of their founder and leader, their legi-

timate and proper name, and from this decision there is no appeal.

We can by no means submit to the task of pursuing this topic further. What other names beside those mentioned above may be current among them, we know not, nor is it important. Upon this subject, as well as upon all those points of doctrine, upon which the Bishop of Bethany has not come out, nothing is settled—nothing is tangible. Nor, indeed, have we any assurance that a solitary article of the Bishop's creed is permanently fixed. His course heretofore, has been the antipodes of consistency. That man who has veered round through every point of the compass, from frigid Antinomianism to semi-pelagianism, may certainly be suspected of a liability to change again; and especially when he professes to have no written creed. But the party that is headed by such a leader have one advantage. They can fly where they please, and thus evade responsibility. We never know where to find them. It is true, if we should have read the last number of the *Millennial Harbinger*, we may know how to take them to-day, but we can have no assurance of finding them in the same attitude a month hence; inasmuch as it is more than probable, that the next number will come surcharged with some new light, diverse from that which preceded. And these are the persons who point the finger of scorn at their brethren, and cry out *creeds, sectarianism, man-worship*; who unchristianize the world, and make their boast

of an exclusive knowledge of the gospel. With little hesitation, we venture to prognosticate, that not a few of them will hold on their way until they have cast away the last tattered remnant of the "faith delivered to the saints."—No distant day may see them enrolled upon the annals of infidelity, as beacons of warning to all who are beginning to worship the fond conceits of their own minds, or those of their leader's. This is what we fear; not what we desire. We would fain hope—nay, we do hope better things of many of them. Some we believe are simple hearted, sincere, and not destitute of piety. Such we sincerely pity. They have been bewildered and led astray; and may we not indulge the hope that they are not destined to "wax worse and worse;" but to be brought to think upon their ways, and to turn their feet again to the path of the Divine Testimonies?

## CHAPTER VII.

## CALL TO THE MINISTRY.

Unchristian sneers of Mr. Campbell on this subject—a call defined—evangelical christians substantially agreed on this point—the true call lays no claims to inspiration or miraculous gifts—such a call possible—necessary—prevailed in the primitive church—and has not ceased—objections answered—mischievous tendency of Mr. Campbell's doctrine.

We have commenced a new subject, but design to despatch it in less time than has been devoted to either of the preceding topics. Independent of the pending controversy, the subject of the ministerial call is one of deep, absorbing interest to thousands, if not to christians universally; and we hope that some remarks upon it may be profitable in more ways than one.

In reference to this matter, we believe that Mr. Campbell has done much injury to the cause of christianity. Upon the call to the ministry, we read various articles from his pen, some years ago, but made no extracts; and having at present, no access to his writings, we shall not be able to state his views in his own words. It is known, however, that here he, professedly stands in opposition to the christian world. Of his, there can be no doubt, upon the mind of any one who has been conversant with the writings of Mr. Campbell, the harangues of his pro-

claimers, or the operations of his "reformation." The sneering manner in which they have uniformly treated this subject, and their constant and reckless denunciation of the "called and sent," cannot but have convinced every attentive observer, that they profess to stand in direct opposition to those who claim a Divine call to the ministry. The truth of this statement—their professing to occupy an opposite position to the "called and sent"—Campbellites themselves, will not deny. Indeed they cannot; for it forms one article of their creed, was issued from their head quarters, and the world knows, they have universally practiced upon it. This being sufficient for our present purpose, we proceed.

Upon this subject, as well as upon many others, there may be some diversity of opinion among evangelical christians; but they are generally, and perhaps entirely agreed, that the prerogative of selecting the ministers of the church belongs to God. That this was the case under the former dispensation, none will question. Aaron, his sons, and the whole tribe of Levi, were, by Divine appointment, consecrated to the priestly office; and Moses, David, and all the prophets derived their authority to declare the counsels of the Almighty from the same source. We discover the same principle in operation at the opening of the gospel dispensation. The first disciples were called by our Lord in person, and by himself commissioned to preach the gospel, first to the Jews, and then to the whole world. And subsequently, St. Paul, though in

a different manner, was called and sent by the same authority. With regard to this, we have no controversy, even with Campbellites. The point at issue is, whether the Almighty exercises the same prerogative in calling men to the ministry now, that he did in the days of the apostles. We believe he does; but before we enter upon the proof, it may be necessary to state what we mean by said call.

This may be simply defined as a *conviction of duty*. The subject of it beholds the world lying in wickedness, sees sinners carelessly pursuing the road to ruin, and becomes anxiously desirous of their salvation. And if to this be added, a firm persuasion that duty requires him to warn them of their danger, and invite them to the Savior of sinners; and if this impression be such as to create restlessness and a sense of guilt, when pursuing any ordinary occupation, to the exclusion of the work of the ministry, it is presumable he is called to this work. All this, however, is evidence only to himself. Something further is necessary to satisfy the church of the reality of his call, and thus to open the way for his engaging in the work. It would certainly be dangerous to the welfare of any church, for her to give indiscriminate license for all to preach who profess to consider it their duty; for some of these may be laboring under a delusion of their own imaginations, and totally disqualified for the work; while others may be hypocrites, and fit only to become ministers of Satan. Hence, all churches have

some method of proving those who claim to be called to the ministry. The evidence that satisfies the Methodist Episcopal church of the reality of this call is the existence of three marks, viz: "grace," "gifts," and "fruit," or usefulness. Whether these do, or do not exist, the church, and those whose province it is to license him, may, to a good degree, determine. "And so long as these three marks concur in any one, we believe he is called of God to preach." But if these are not found, he is not received; and this circumstance, if he is humble and considerate, will lead him to conclude either that he has mistaken his calling, or that the time has not arrived for him to enter upon the work; for the Providence of God will surely prepare the way before him whom he has selected to labor in his vineyard. But if the above mentioned three marks are found to concur in the applicant, the church authorities do not hesitate to authorize him to preach; and thus his convictions concerning the path of duty are confirmed; and in after life, the fruit of his labor tends to strengthen and establish him in the work.

These are the views of our own denomination, in reference to the ministerial call; and so far as we know, our brethren of other denominations, entertain, substantially, the same sentiments. But the question arises, how is this conviction of duty produced? Who, or what is its author? We have already expressed the belief that God exercises the same prerogative now, in calling men to the ministry, that he did



in the days of the apostles ; and we will add our hearty concurrence in the views of the church to which we belong, that every true minister of Jesus Christ "is moved by the Holy Ghost" to preach the gospel. But it is not contended by us, nor by any orthodox church, that the modes by which the will of the Almighty is made known to the selected individual, are the same now that they were in former ages. That there is, in some respects, a difference between them, cannot, for a moment, be doubted. But this concession does not in the least, militate against the opinion that the call is still Divine ; for in the age of miracles, men were not always called to the sacred office in the same manner. While the will of God, in setting apart Aaron and the tribe of Levi, was made known through Moses, that will in relation to the work assigned to Moses, Samuel, and the prophets, was communicated immediately to themselves ; and while Peter and John, and the rest of the eleven, received their commission from the lips of the Savior before his ascension, Saul of Tarsus was afterwards called in a different manner, though none the less effectual. The fact, therefore, that a change in the manner of calling men to the ministry has taken place since the days of the apostles, is no argument against the reality of the call. It is no longer miraculous, but it is still Divine.

The ministerial call, as believed in, and understood by Protestant Christians, lays no claim to an influence of the Spirit amounting to inspi-

ration, in its primary sense, nor to the gift of tongues, or the power of working miracles. These belonged exclusively to former times, and are not at present called for. Dreams and visions, extraordinary and unaccountable impressions, and the hearing of voices, constitute no part of that call for which we contend. It is admitted, however, that some modern enthusiasts, such as the Irvingites of England, and the Mormonites of this country, have pretended to possess these extraordinary powers; and it may be that some sincere and pious persons among the regular churches, have imagined themselves called to engage in the ministry, by visions and by audible, supernatural voices. But these imaginings, the offspring of weak or unsteady minds, can no more be charged upon the churches where they may have occurred, than can Bishop Rigdon's follies, who left the "reformation" for Mormonism, be charged upon Bishop Campbell. Certain it is, that the sects in this country, against which Mr. Campbell's philippics have been directed, do not give countenance to these fables, or lay claim to any such extraordinary powers. We have mentioned these things because "reformers" have been in the habit of misrepresenting our views upon this subject. Whether from ignorance or otherwise, we know not, but it is certain their usual practice has been to represent the gift of tongues and the power of working miracles as inseparable from the ministerial call; and because we believe in the latter, they have charged us with

the absurdity and folly of laying claim to the former. And after having thus reared an imaginary something, which no sober minded, intelligent christian in modern times, ever thought of admitting into his creed, we have beheld them gravely set about the work of demolishing it. But the folly with which they brand us is the creature of their own brain. It has never disgraced our creeds, and we trust never will. And their conduct in this respect may be well likened to that of the juggler, who professes to conjure up an evil spirit that he may have the honor and the profit of sending it back to its own place, and thus excite the astonishment of his credulous auditory.

We defined above this ministerial call as being *a conviction of duty, wrought by the Holy Ghost in the heart of him who is selected for the work, so as to render it dangerous and sinful for him to refuse to engage in it* ; but not so as to suppose him inspired, in the ordinary sense of that term, or endowed with miraculous gifts.

The possibility of men being thus called, will scarcely be questioned by any one who believes the Bible, and seriously considers the tendency of such a position. We are aware that Mr. Campbell's ultraism in reference to the influence of the Spirit, assuming that men can only be operated upon through the media of words or signs, would render that call to the ministry for which we contend, an impossibility ; for grant this position, and it will certainly

follow, that the Almighty, without the intervention of a preternatural voice, or something else of that character, could call no man to preach. But this assumption we have previously examined and found it to be both unscriptural and unreasonable ; and we are not prepared to believe that Mr. Campbell would have adopted it, had he been fully aware of its tendency. If it can be carried out, without landing him in materialism, we are much mistaken. To suppose it impossible for that pure and omnipotent Spirit who gave man his being, to have immediate intercourse with the spirits of his creatures, is not only to limit his power and reject his Word, which plainly teaches such an intercourse, but virtually to deny the possibility of the existence of spirit separate from matter, a consequence so entirely hostile to christianity that every sober minded, sincere Campbellite, must refuse to give it his sanction. But to attempt proof here is not necessary. Our readers will at once see, that it is possible for the Almighty by his Spirit to impress upon the minds of those whom he designs to make his ambassadors, the conviction that it is their duty to preach the Gospel, while by his providence he opens the way for them to engage in this important work.

That there is now as great a necessity for preaching the gospel, as there was at any former period of the church, will not, perhaps, be doubted. At any rate, all will admit that the gospel should be preached. But who are to

preach it? Men who are called, or men who are not called? Those who consider it their duty, or those who do not consider it their duty? Unquestionably the former; for if Campbellites or others, engage in preaching or proclaiming, who do not esteem it their duty to do so, they are acting the part of dishonest hypocrites; and consequently, doing the service of Satan. The gospel then must be preached by men who consider it their duty to engage in this work. And here the question of the apostle is forcible, "How shall they preach except they be sent." But it may be said the church is to send them, and that this is all the call that is required. We do not know, indeed, that Campbellites will admit of even this; for we believe it to be a part of their economy to allow the whole fraternity, male and female, to teach and administer the ordinances, just as seemeth good in their own eyes. It may be, however, that in certain cases they consider an appointment by the church to be necessary. And here we shall not disagree; for we formerly acknowledged it to be the duty of the church to sanction, and showed the importance of ministers receiving her authority. But this does not supercede the necessity of a higher call. For the church can only license such as are convinced that duty requires them to preach; and the question to be settled is, How did they receive this conviction? St. Paul tells us, that "he who desires the office of a bishop, desires a *good work*;" and another inspired writer as-

sures us that "every *good* and perfect gift cometh down from the Father of lights." Now put these together, and we have the irresistible conclusion that the minister of Christ receives his convictions of duty, and his desires for the work, from above ; and consequently, his call is divine. In confirmation of this, let it be remembered that the Lord, in allusion to the present dispensation, promised, by Jeremiah, to give the church "pastors according to his own heart;" in which he undoubtedly claimed the privilege of selecting his own ministers. And in perfect agreement with the above, is the direction of our Lord to his followers. "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." Now such a prayer as this upon Campbellite principles, would certainly amount to a solemn mockery. What! pray to the Lord to do that which he will have no hand in doing? which he has left to the discretion of the church, or to the whim of each individual member? No indeed; such a prayer would be too much like that of the fabled waggoner, and no consistent Campbellite would presume to offer it. His plan would be to advise the church to make such selections from among the members as she should see fit, and send them out into the field, or to leave the harvest for every novice to thrust in his sickle, and spoil and destroy the grain at his pleasure. But this method of making ministers is of modern invention; not dating so far back as the days of Jesus Christ, or his apostles. The "Lord

of the harvest" did not advise his followers to select such young men as they should consider pious, and send them to college that they might learn to preach, nor to select and send out such as they might consider already to have a suitable education ; but to pray to Him, whose province it is to select his own ambassadors, that He would send them forth into his vineyard. And if such a command does not necessarily imply that every true minister of Christ is called of God, and "moved by the Holy Ghost," to preach the gospel, it will, we presume, be extremely difficult to find that it means any thing.

But Mr. Campbell will tell us, that the impression as to the path of duty, of which we have spoken, may be produced by various natural means, without supposing any divine agency, that reading, conversation, attending the preaching of the Word, or the casual remarks of a parent, may serve to fix the notion of preaching upon the mind of his youthful son, which in process of time ripens in the firm conviction that he is called to the work. That any, or all these may be used as secondary causes in effecting the object under consideration, we have no disposition to question ; for this is in perfect accordance with the idea of a call from above. God ordinarily works by means, he alone it is, that justifies and sanctifies the sinner, and yet he has ordained the preaching of the gospel, and various other means to promote the salvation of souls. The

Lord Jesus could have given the blind man sight by a word, but he chose to make use of clay and spittle, and then to send him to the pool of Siloam that he might wash and see. But the use of these means did not render the cure any the less the effect of Divine power ; nor does the intervention of means, in fixing upon the mind an impression of the duty of preaching the gospel, militate in the least against the idea that the Holy Ghost is the prime mover and instigator to that work.

And is there not, in the very nature of things, a necessity for the appointment of the ministers of the church, by Divine authority ? This necessity certainly did exist in former times, and appointments were made accordingly. Hence, the Levites were consecrated to the duties of the sanctuary, under the Mosaic dispensation ; and hence, the apostles were commissioned to preach the gospel and administer the ordinances at the opening of the christian era. These appointments were all by Divine authority. And is the church of God of less consequence under the christian dispensation, than it was under the Jewish ? Does it not require as much of his fostering care now as it did in the days of Paul and Peter ? Men are still required, whose business it shall be to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments—work to which the apostles were specially appointed by the Head of the church—and surely we are authorized to infer that the same wisdom and authority are still necessary in selecting and ap-



pointing those who are to discharge these important duties.

That this principle prevailed in the church during the time that the inspired writers have furnished us with its history, will not admit of a doubt. Subsequently to the commissioning of the eleven, Paul and Barnabas received authority from the same source, and the Holy Ghost required them to be separated for the work whereunto *he had called them*. The elders of Ephesus received their commissions in like manner ; for St. Paul commanded them “to feed the church of God,” over which the *Holy Ghost had made them overseers*. And we may safely infer that all the early preachers, whether apostles, elders, deacons, or teachers, derived their authority from the same Almighty power. This, indeed, cannot be disputed. Even Campbellites admit the Divine authority of the apostles ; but tell us that that authority was not extended beyond the first age of christianity. But this remains to be proved, and if it were established, it would prove too much ; for the authority to administer baptism, being inseparably connected with the call to the ministry, the latter cannot be disannulled, without abrogating the former. The Savior after his resurrection, said to his disciples, “Go ye, therefore, and *teach* all nations, *baptizing* them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;” and in thus commissioning them to preach his gospel, he instituted the ordinance of christian baptism, and authorised

and commanded them to administer it. It is, therefore, clear that the call to the ministry and the right to baptize, are so united that they must stand or fall together ; and hence that argument which goes to confine the ministerial call to the apostolic age, will have the same effect upon the authority to administer baptism, and prove that the world has had neither preachers nor ordinances for the last seventeen centuries.

We are aware that Campbellism proceeds upon the supposition that every convert made by the apostles, was permitted to turn baptizer. But this is assumption, and not proof. Mr. Campbell, indeed, has labored hard to prove it : but with all the tortures to which his ingenuity has subjected the subtilities of sophistry, he has not been able to adduce from the New Testament, either precept or example in favor of baptism by laymen. Nor is this at all astonishing, for that book contains no evidence that any individual, not called of God to the work of the ministry, ever did administer baptism. Mr. Campbell may presume and suppose what he pleases, and his followers may assist him with their own imaginings for aught we care ; but a thousand of their suppositions will not make one Bible truth. The proof is what we require ; and that can never be given. But on the contrary, we have certain knowledge, not only that the authority to preach and baptize, was originally given by the great Head of the church to the same individuals, but that this

practice continued down to the close of the New Testament history of the church; and that we have no conclusive evidence of baptism having been performed by laymen, till that darkness and superstition began to overspread the church, which gave birth to Mr. Campbell's fundamental error that baptism is essential to salvation. We, may, therefore, safely infer that the notion that all christians have equal authority to administer the ordinances, has no other foundation than mere human opinion. And hence, we repeat, that any argument which shall prove the call to the ministry to have ceased with the apostles, will prove that all authority to baptize shared the same fate; and as baptism is the initiating rite, it must follow that there is at present, no visible church upon earth.

The limits assigned to the investigation of the present topic, admonish us that further remarks in proof of the perpetuation of a Divinely constituted ministry to preach the Gospel, and administer the ordinances of the church, must be suspended. And indeed, we consider the proof already given, as abundantly sufficient; for though we occupy the affirmative of the question, the circumstances of the case are such as to throw the necessity of furnishing proof entirely upon our opponents. We have seen that a divinely constituted ministry did once exist—that the original apostles and after them Paul and Barnabas, Silas and Philip, and the elders of Ephesus, and in short, all the preachers and teachers of the apostolic age,

were called of God, and by him appointed to the work ; and in the absence of all proof to the contrary, we are bound to infer that such a ministry is still continued in the church. It remains, then for Mr. Campbell to prove the negative of this ; to show from Scripture that the Almighty has ceased to appoint his ministers, and surrendered that prerogative which he exercised in the first age of the church. And until this is done, we shall consider the raillery and satire with which he and his satellites are in the habit of honoring the “ called and sent ;” and all their assertions and presumings that the Holy Ghost has called no man to preach, since the apostles left the world, as abortive and insignificant, in view of the question at issue, as was the weight of the conceited gnat upon the horn of the ox.

It only remains now for us to examine a few objections or arguments that have been urged against a Divine call to the ministry.

1. Such a call is said to be unreasonable, because those who profess to be the subjects of it, are not only destitute of the means of convincing others, but sometimes are in doubts themselves, whether in reality they have received it.

The first member of this objection can have no bearing upon the question, because the fact assumed is not true. He who possesses grace, gifts, and talents for usefulness, who lives a blameless, holy life, and is “ apt to teach,” who “ desires” the “ good work” of a minister, and in whose hands “ the sword of the

Spirit" is made "the power of God unto salvation," is not destitute of the means of convincing others of the Divine reality of his call. For these signs and qualifications necessarily appertain to the ministerial character as set forth in the Scriptures, and can only attend upon him whom God has qualified for the work. Nor are we warranted to believe that any man can thus preach the gospel without this Divine authority. Lecture and harangue the people, as do Mr. Campbell's proclaimers, he may ; but to preach "Christ Jesus, and him crucified," "in demonstration of the Spirit, and with power," so that sinners are pierced to the heart, and brought to experience the power of saving grace, is wholly beyond his ability, and belongs to him only who has received "power from on high." And he whose life and labors manifest the presence of this "holy unction," will ever carry conviction to the minds of at least a part of his hearers, that his authority is Divine.

Of the truth of the second part of the objection, we have no doubt. Gospel ministers may sometimes be in doubt as to the reality of their call. But we shall not admit that this is any argument against a Divinely constituted ministry ; for on the contrary, it appears in perfect accordance with man's probationary state, in which it may at times be needful for him to be "in heaviness through manifold temptations," and in which God may lead him "by a way that he knows not." That the child of God,

in some dark moment, may seriously question his acceptance, cannot admit of a rational doubt. To this, we are aware Mr. Campbell demurs, and assumes that christians may know they are washed from their sins so long as they remember their immersion; but as this method of proving our adoption is man's work—being wholly unknown to the New Testament—it only shows the folly of that system of which it forms a conspicuous part. We therefore repeat that the christian may, at times, be led to question whether he has been “born again;” but does this fact prove that there is no such thing as the new birth? Not at all. And yet it might be urged in proof of this, with as much plausibility, as can the fact that ministers may have doubts of the reality of their call, to prove that God has never called them. The truth is, that in either case the evidence of its reality, may, in some instances, be attained by slow degrees, and in point of clearness, may not only differ in different individuals, but owing to constitutional temperament, and other causes, it may at different times vary in the same individual. But still the work is of God. It is his Spirit that witnesses to the believer, that he is born from above, and it is the Holy Ghost that moves the christian minister to preach the gospel. And whatever doubts may arise in either case, they will generally be removed by searching the Scriptures, self-examination, and fervent prayer. In proportion as the christian walks worthy of his vocation, and advances in

holiness, will his doubts and fears decrease; and just so with the minister of the gospel in reference to his call to the work of an evangelist.

2. But in the next place we are told, that it is absurd to suppose that God would call such ignorant and illiterate men, as are many of the professedly "called and sent," to teach others the way of salvation. We shall by no means contend that all who profess a Divine call to the ministry, are in reality thus called. There were false teachers even in the apostles' days, and there are such still. Some, from sinister motives may have been led to assume the livery of heaven, while others, in engaging in the work, may be honestly mistaken; but in both cases, they lack the most essential qualification, and their deficiencies will ultimately be discovered by others, if not by themselves. And whether such be ignorant or learned in reference to literary attainments, the result is the same. Nor shall we offer any apology for ignorance in the christian minister, by supposing that the Almighty consecrates stupidity and blindness of mind to his service. In the first age of christianity, we are aware that he "chose the weak things of this world to confound the mighty," but this was in the day of miracles; and though he may still, in some instances, act upon the same principle, we have no reason to believe that this principle prevails in the present day, to the extent that it did in the infancy of christianity. Ignorance and

blindness of mind are the effects of sin ; and as the minister wars with sin, he should especially labor to free his own mind from its paralyzing effects. In short, he should, he must have a theological education. But on this subject we must needs explain. By the education spoken of, we do not mean an academic initiation into scientific theology ; nor will we admit that the real usefulness of ministers bears a general sort of proportion to their classical attainments, or to the external advantages they may have enjoyed ; though such attainments, so far from being disreputable, or unworthy the attention of the minister, may greatly assist him in his work. The education to which we refer, is nothing else than a comprehensive knowledge of the Bible—a thorough acquaintance with the scheme of salvation through a crucified Savior, as set forth in the Scriptures. In addition, we care not how much literary and scientific knowledge may be possessed. The more, the better, if judiciously used to advance the great object of preaching—but still without these, the minister may be extensively useful in his vocation. Let him be taught in the school of Christ, and by industry and intense application, by “ watchings, fastings, and tribulations,” by faith and spirituality, and indifference to the world, and above all, by fervent, effectual prayer, have acquired a deep and extensive knowledge of Revealed Truth ; and this is all the theological education which we consider absolutely indispensable. But is there



any justice in designating such a one as an ignorant man?" By no means. It is true his literary acquirements may extend but little beyond the bare competency to read the English Bible; and yet on theological questions, and on experimental and practical religion, he may be fully competent to instruct even Alexander Campbell.

The objection now under consideration, has been very current among the teachers of Mr. Campbell's gospel. Nor is this at all marvellous, for their leader set the example by ridiculing the idea that men so destitute of literary attainments as to have no theoretical knowledge of their mother tongue, should profess to be called of God to preach, and his followers of course had to echo the same sentiment. We once heard a proclaimer laboring upon this point, who took occasion to observe that he pitied the ignorant enthusiast, who could stand in the pulpit and say, "Wo is me if I preach not the gospel;" and we recollected to have seen the same proclaimer some years before, in the pulpit as a Baptist preacher, and to have heard him say, "Necessity is laid upon me; yea, wo is me if I preach not the gospel." And we could but think that he had taken an excellent method to convince the public of his want of consistency. Formerly he averred in the most positive manner, that God had called him to preach, and now he as positively declared that he never received any such call; and surely the man who could thus contradict him-

self, should not be astonished if an intelligent community should consider him as either defective in understanding, or in point of moral honesty. Nor is this the only inconsistency involved in the objection before us ; for even if it was plausible, it comes with very ill grace from those who urge it. However deficient in point of intelligence some of the professedly "called and sent" may be, they have certainly not monopolized all the ignorance of the day. The teachers of Campbellism, numbers considered, have at least an equal proportion of this commodity. On this point we have been an attentive observer some years, and should it ever be found expedient to immortalize that denomination of professed christians, whose teachers possess the lowest amount of literary and theological information, we hazard nothing in saying that Campbellites will stand a good chance to live for ever. If then, that want of intelligence which they charge upon the ministers of Christ, be such as to disqualify them for preaching, and thus to render their call questionable, must not the teachers of the "ancient gospel," with the same amount of ignorance, be equally incompetent? Or does it require a less amount of information to qualify a man to become a teacher of religion, without a Divine call, than with one? Let the reader judge.

3. In the third place, a special call to the ministry is declared to be incredible, because

of the contradictory doctrines of those who equally profess to have received it.

This objection is pretty much of a piece with another statement from the same source. Mr. Campbell has said, and no doubt all of his proclaimers have reiterated it, that *the preachers of the various sects preach different gospels*. But neither this assertion, nor the above objection, can be received without considerable abatement. Arminians and Calvinists, Churchmen and Dissenters, with all the various denominations that are considered evangelical, not only preach the same gospel, but so far as its essential features are concerned they preach the same doctrines. While they differ concerning church government, external ceremonies, the extent of the atonement, and other things of less importance, so far as to justify their sectional divisions, they all unite in proclaiming the same Lord and Savior, "God manifest in the flesh," and the merits of his death, as the only ground for the sinner's hope of pardon, and justification by faith, and regeneration and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, and in ascribing all the glory of man's salvation alone to God. Hence the different sects so much abused by Mr. Campbell, preach substantially the same fundamental doctrines, and entirely the same gospel, while he it is that stands aloof, differing from them all, and proclaiming "another gospel." And thus Mr. Campbell and his little party are found arrayed upon one side, and against them the fearful odds of the

Bible, and all the evangelical sects of Protestant christendom.

But still the above objection is urged, and we are asked, "If men are called to preach, why do they not speak the same language, and hold forth precisely the same doctrines?" The reason is obvious—they are not inspired. If they were inspired to inform the world of doctrines not previously revealed, we might expect an entire unity, so far as those doctrines were concerned; but even then they might differ in reference to other matters. Such differences in reality obtained among the apostles. Paul withstood Peter to the face, insisting that he was to blame; and Paul and Barnabas differed in judgment and separated. And though they preached "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism," they expressed themselves in language and manner so different, that we will venture to say, the most absurd tenet that has been countenanced by any respectable denomination of christians in modern times, may find as much apparent support in some isolated texts of their writings, as can the leading features of Mr. Campbell's system in any portion of the Scriptures. But neither the various methods used by the apostles in detailing those doctrines in which they were perfectly agreed, nor those differences in judgment that actually existed among them, furnish any reason to question their inspiration; and certainly the difference of views among ministers of the present day, upon points of minor importance,

not affecting the sure foundation, can be no evidence that they are not sent of God.

4. Another objection to a Divinely constituted ministry, is the absence of miraculous gifts.—“You say that God has called you to preach,” says Mr. Campbell, “work a miracle, and we will believe you.”

This objection, in some sense, forms the basis of all the others; and, no doubt, is the principal source of error in leading to a rejection of the ministerial call. To confound the work of the minister with the working of miracles, or to suppose that the preaching of the gospel, and miraculous gifts and powers, were necessarily united, and always appertained to the same individuals, even in the days of the apostles, is assuming what cannot be proved from the New Testament; for on the contrary, that book obviously leads to a different conclusion. Both women and men, ordinary members of the church, in some instances, prophesied and were favored with miraculous, spiritual gifts, though never called or set apart to the work of the ministry. These visible and extraordinary manifestations of the power of God, were, it is true, first imparted to the apostles, but did not necessarily constitute a part of their call to preach, being given to convince the world of the truth of that system which they were inspired to make known. And as this object could be advanced wherever those “signs and wonders” were seen in the converts to that system, it is not only reasonable that they should

be imparted to others than the apostles, but clear, from some parts of St. Paul's epistles, that spiritual gifts, including the power of working miracles, were actually conferred on many of the primitive christians. Seeing, then, that these extraordinary gifts, while they continued in the church, were not confined to the apostles and preachers, and did not exclusively appertain to the ministerial character, it is certainly very unreasonable to argue that the want of such powers, in preachers of the present day, is evidence that they are not called to the work. The same argument, if we are not much mistaken, would be equally as successful in proving that there is not at present, one on earth, who believes in Christ; for he expressly declared that "these signs"—casting out devils, speaking with new tongues, and healing the sick—"should follow them that *believe*."

At the first propagation of the gospel, miracles were necessary; not to qualify the minister to deliver his message, but to convince his hearers of its truth. But there was no necessity for their continuance beyond that period which saw the Revelation of Jesus Christ completed, and his religion established by evidence that rendered it unreasonable to doubt. Hence, St. Paul, in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians, plainly declared that the time should come, when the gift of tongues and of prophesying should "cease and vanish away," and when this period arrived, those extraordinary means of spreading the gospel were taken from the

church ; hence, the necessity for miracles ceased with the establishment of christianity ; but the necessity of evangelizing the world by the ordinary means of preaching the gospel, did not then cease, nor can it while there remains an impenitent sinner upon earth. It is, therefore, certain that the calling of men to the ministry has been, and must be perpetuated.

5. The last objection or argument we shall notice, is of a character somewhat different from the preceding ; being nothing more than the declaration of those who oppose the idea of the existence of a Divinely constituted ministry, that they themselves are not called.

This argument has been much in vogue among the proclaimers of Campbellism. One of them, some years ago in a public harangue, capt the climax of a number of anti-call arguments, by assuring his hearers, that he was neither "called nor sent to preach !" Upon which a drunk man in the congregation instantly responded, "Then, sir, I think you had better sit down." Had this man been sober, we doubt whether he could have spoken more to the point ; for certainly it argues a little temerity, for any man to be constantly endeavoring to do that which he declares he has no authority to do. But to return to the argument. We have not the least disposition to attempt to detract from its merits, or to weaken its force. That man who tells me he is not called to preach, I am bound to believe in this matter ; but to infer from this that all others are as des-

titute of a call as he is, would be strange logic. We have heard of an honest German who thought himself fully competent to prove that there was no such city as London, because he had crossed the ocean and never seen it. But this argument instead of showing the non existence of the place, only proved the ignorance of the man. And so it is with the case before us. The proclaimer, who declares that God has never called him to minister in holy things, leaves entirely untouched the question of the reality of such a call in other cases, while he furnishes pretty conclusive evidence of his own incapacity and lack of authority for the work in which he is engaged. We pray that all such may see their folly, and turn from the error of their ways, lest in the day of retribution, God should say to them as to the wicked, "What hadst thou to do to declare my statutes, or to take my covenant in thy mouth?"

Having despatched these objections, we shall close the present topic. At its commencement we expressed the conviction that Mr. Campbell's opposition to the ministerial call had done much injury to christianity. We are still of the same opinion. Whatever tends to subvert the established order of the church, and to diminish that respect and regard which are justly due to its officers and their work, must in a ratio proportionate to its prevalence, operate to the disadvantage of true godliness. And who but a "reformer," will question that Campbellism has had this tendency? That God has set



in the church pastors and ministers, selected by him, and set apart "by prayer and the laying on of hands," for preaching the Word and administering the ordinances, cannot be rationally doubted by any one who believes the Bible, and carefully and impartially examines its contents. But the "restorer of the ancient order," has impiously cast all these aside, declaring that God does not specially call any man to this work, that all men have equal authority to preach, to baptize, and to consecrate the elements of the Lord's supper; and has thus to the utmost of his ability, not only subverted all "rule and authority" in the church, but greatly detracted from that sanctity and solemnity that appertain to the institutions of the Lord; and even joined with the infidel in pouring contempt upon his ministers and people. We have noticed for some years the striking similarity between Mr. Campbell and the avowed enemies of christianity, in regard to the abuse and ridicule with which they honor the ministers and people of the different sects of christians. This similarity has been observed by others; and in one case, at least, it came near placing a devoted "reformer" in rather an unpleasant attitude. A gentleman of our acquaintance who had been more than once honored with a seat in the legislature of Kentucky, became a convert to Campbellism while it was yet in its infancy. After some years, he was, without knowing its character, induced to subscribe for one of those *liberal* publica-

tions, that advocate the most barefaced atheism, and blaspheme the sacred principles of virtue and religion. When the paper came to hand, he was greatly delighted in reading its columns; and showed it to some of his brethren, assuring them that it was an excellent auxiliary in the cause of the "reformation." But they, having more knowledge on such subjects, discovered its true character, and informed him that the editor was an avowed infidel. "An infidel," said he, "it is not possible! Why, he ridicules the sects, and preachers, and priests, and priest-craft, just like Mr. Campbell." And indeed, so it was. The champion of this modern "reformation," the digger up of the "ancient gospel" from beneath the accumulated rubbish of centuries, and the impious atheist, were found using the same weapons against the benevolent institutions of the day, and in opposition to the piety and wisdom of the age. We do not mean, however, to charge Mr. Campbell with atheism. Where he may land in future, we know not, nor is it our province even to guess; but at present, we see no reason to suspect him of any bias in that direction. And yet the fact above stated, cannot be denied, and we do believe that his principles and practice, in reference to this subject alone, have greatly tended "to strengthen the hands of evil doers," and subvert the Scriptural order and economy of God's church, and thereby, done more injury to the cause of christianity, than every redeeming feature of his "reformation," and all his talents and acquirements are likely to atone for.

## CHAPTER V.

## CONCLUSION.

Mr. Campbell's dilemma considered respecting the operation of the Spirit—bad effects of Mr. C.'s doctrine on this topic—recapitulation of the foregoing chapters—concluding remarks.

The Millennial Harbinger for August 1835, contains a communication in relation to some of our remarks that seems to require a passing notice, before we make our exit. It was written from James Town, Ohio, by one who appears to be as thoroughly Campbellized as any other reformer. We do not notice it, either because we have any desire to engage the chivalrous writer, or because we consider the merit of his production, to require any attention ; but for the purpose of stating distinctly one consequence of Mr. Campbell's system, to which we do not recollect to have adverted. The article referred to contains the following sentences ;—


“ Now, friend Phillips, answer the following question, and I will engage to place you between the horns of a dilemma, from which you cannot extricate yourself :—

*Is the belief of an abstract, or direct operation of the Holy Spirit, necessary in order to said operation ?*

If you answer in the affirmative, then away goes your position ; for that would make the operation through *faith*, and not *direct* or *abstract*.

If you answer in the negative, then why preach the necessity of believing it, seeing that the Spirit operates to the saving of men without the belief.

You have wasted, and are still wasting, much time in preaching and writing to men about that which will do them no good; for the belief or unbelief of the thing, does not alter the matter.

 Now get out from between these horns, if you can."

The writer of the above has only copied and echoed the argument, if argument it may be called, of his file leader. Mr. Campbell had previously assumed the same ground, and his correspondent, of course, considered himself in an impregnable fortress, while repeating it. But let us look at the question. "Is the belief of a direct operation of the Holy Spirit, necessary in order to that operation?" We answer, *no*. So far as said operation is necessary to convince the sinner of sin, the work will be done, even though he should disbelieve the existence of the Holy Spirit; for one object for which the Spirit was given, was to "reprove the world of sin, because they *believe* not;" from which declaration of the Savior, it is clear that his Spirit operates not only through faith, but upon those who are in unbelief. But though men are irresistibly convicted, it does not follow that they are converted in the same manner; nor does the admission, that sinners are reproved by the Spirit in the absence of their

belief in the reality of his operations, drive us to the necessity of supposing them regenerated and sanctified without that belief. The former is plainly taught in the Scriptures; the latter we have no authority for. The first operations of the Spirit are given, to arouse the sinner and show him his danger, and this is effected, either with or without the existence of even the faith of a devil—and if he attend the call, and improve the grace thus imparted, the same Spirit excites and aids him to repent, and to exercise that faith—reliance upon a crucified Savior—through which he receives pardon, and is restored to the favor of God. But he has power to “resist the Holy Ghost,” as did the Jews of old, and while he does this, either by hardening his heart, or by blasphemously denying the existence or the operations of the Spirit, we are assured that there is no hope of his salvation. Where then are the horns of the above dilemma? They have lost their potency; and indeed, they have no existence, except in the imaginations of the writer, and of those who, like him, have become “wise above that which is written.” We have no difficulty, however, in accounting for his mistake in this matter. Every thing considered, it was perfectly natural for him to suppose, he had placed us between the horns of an inextricable dilemma. All his notions of religion had been derived from Mr. Campbell, who had repeatedly told him that the views of the ultra Calvinist, in regard to the work of the Spirit, and those of the Arminian,

resulted in the same conclusion; and as the former consider the work of regeneration to be effected by an irresistible operation of the Spirit, the latter, of course, must end in a similar conclusion. All this, we say, Mr. Campbell had told him—he was bound to consider it as true as the “ancient gospel,” and hence the origin of his imaginary dilemma. But if he will study the Bible, place less dependence upon the opinions of his leader, and make himself acquainted with the doctrines of the Methodist church, we venture to guess, that he will not, in future, attempt to involve an Arminian in any such dilemmas.

But we have yet another reason, and one of no ordinary weight, for endeavoring to teach and defend the doctrine of Spiritual influence. Connected, as it is, with other doctrines and duties of vital importance, we are convinced that its rejection cannot but lead to the most direful of consequences. Let Mr. Campbell’s views upon this subject prevail—let it be a conceded point among christians, that the Holy Spirit only operates through the Word, just as the thoughts and ideas of a Locke or a Newton are conveyed to us through their writings, and if it does not render prayer an unmeaning ceremony, and ultimately banish it from the earth, we are very much mistaken. The apostle taught, that prayers should be made for all men, because God would have all men to be saved. But what connection can exist between our prayers and the salvation of sinners, unless in answer to them, the Holy Spirit convicts, and

brings them to the knowledge of the truth? None in the world. Strike this doctrine from the christian system, and we shall be doomed to see our unconverted friends perish in their sins, without the privilege of entreating the Almighty in mercy to turn them from the error of their ways. And another unavoidable conclusion will be, that prayer for Spiritual blessings of any description, is wholly useless and unnecessary to the christian character. It will, therefore, follow, that men instead of praying "without ceasing," will cease to pray; and thus the most important of christian duties, be driven from the world. Here we must land, if we surrender the teachings of the Spirit, or consider its influence as synonymous with moral effects of the written Word. All, it is true, who make this surrender, may not immediately be led to look on prayer as a vain thing, and to abandon its performance; for the opinions and practice of some are happily inconsistent; but the prevalence of such principles must tend to weaken our hold on prayer, and to produce an imaginary independence of the Divine Being.

These are the natural, and to some extent, the unavoidable fruits of Mr. Campbell's doctrines; and, as such, are already visible among his followers. Some of his teachers ridicule prayer in many of their discourses, and occasionally, if not uniformly, dispense with it in their public congregations; and all of them, so far as we have information, teach the penitent that it would be not only useless, but blasphemous.

mous for him to pray for pardon—that he has nothing to do but be immersed; and the result of such teachings have made professed christians—zealous Campbellites—who acknowledge they have no practical acquaintance with the duty under consideration—who confess they have never prayed on any occasion, public or private; and who seem to glory in having found a religion that does not require the cross bearing of any such burdensome ceremonies. Now it is not contended that every Campbellite has gone to this extreme, but it is confidently asserted that some have, and firmly believed, that in so doing they have only carried out their system of doctrines to its legitimate results. In regard to the duty of prayer, Antinomianism and Campbellism after starting at points as far asunder as the north from the south pole, meet upon a common level. The former, by teaching that God saves men irresistibly, and even against their wills, forbids the penitent to *ask* that he may receive mercy, and renders prayer under any circumstances wholly useless; and the latter by assuming, that the Lord Jesus, after finishing the work of redemption, left his Spirit in his Word, and has nothing farther to do in converting sinners, arrives at the same conclusion. And here each has exalted itself against the truth—and that too upon a point of the most vital importance. The Scriptures, both by precept and example, abundantly teach the pardon of sin in answer to prayer, as well as persevering in that duty in order to eter-



nal salvation, while they give us no reason to believe that ever a prayerless sinner was pardoned or saved; but Campbellism openly proclaims that sinners are pardoned without one word of prayer, and by necessary consequence from the principles assumed, that their final salvation is, in no sense, dependent upon the performance of this duty. And this is the legitimate fruit of that notion concerning spiritual influence, against which our labors have been directed. Such a doctrine is God dishonoring and soul destroying in its tendency. It is calculated to make "blind leaders of the blind," and to induce whoever receives it to cry "peace, peace," while there is no peace, and to expect salvation in a way that God has never ordained. And yet, in opposing this doctrine, we are gravely told, that we are "preaching and writing to men about that which will do them no good—that the belief, or unbelief of the thing does not alter the matter." Mr. Campbell and his correspondent, may think to involve us in dilemmas, such as the above, and talk of the inutility of correctly understanding the doctrine of Divine influence, as taught in the Bible, as much as they please. Such things may pass very well with those who look upon the bishop of Bethany as an oracle; but we have little fear that they will be much lauded by men of sound judgment, and correct Bible information.

We now proceed to sum up and present in a condensed form the positions and arguments of

the foregoing essays. A very brief recapitulation is all that can be given.

In the progress of these essays we have examined the principal features in the superstructure of the Campbellite reformation, commencing with its foundation stone, baptismal regeneration, which we found among the rubbish of the papal apostasy, and after testing its claims by the Word of God, discovered it to have no other authority than the erroneous interpretation of some four or five isolated texts; while some hundreds of passages were found to teach a directly contrary doctrine—remission *not* by *water*, but by *faith*. And knowing that Mr. Campbell does not extend this blessing to those who have received baptism, according to the ordinary understanding of the import of that ordinance, but confines it to those who have been immersed, we patiently investigated every passage of Scripture that seems to have any bearing upon the mode of baptism, and found no proof that Jesus Christ ever commanded immersion, or that the apostles practiced it in one solitary instance. The conclusion, therefore, at which we have arrived, is, that Mr. Campbell has made the soul's salvation, to depend upon the performance of an ordinance in a mode that is, at least, of questionable authority. But however this be, we have proved, that the object for which he administers baptism, and the effect he ascribes to it, are contrary to the views of every christian denomination among us, whether Baptist or otherwise; that with him immer-

sion and regeneration are synonymous terms, so that no one can be born of God until he is immersed; and that these views are opposed in common by Baptists, Methodists and Presbyterians, and have no more authority from Scripture than the fable of transubstantiation.

We have, in the next place, inquired for the evidence to which Campbellites resort as proof of their being in a state of favor with God, and discovered it not to vary materially from the means by which they profess to have obtained that favor. We had previously found immersion, with them, to be the act of turning to God, and now we discovered them referring to their immersion as evidence that they had turned to God; and contending that any man, who, historically, believes the gospel facts and goes down into the water, is regenerated, and may always refer to that circumstance, as proof of his justified state. We then looked around upon those who had passed through Mr. Campbell's "regenerating bath," and found scores and hundreds, not only continuing to "wallow in the mire," but whose last state really appeared worse than the first. It therefore appeared clear, that this kind of evidence was not to be trusted; for if immersion proves one man to be a child of God, it proves every immersed person to be the same; but many of these are still in the "gall of bitterness;" and hence, the circumstance of having been buried in the water, proves no man to be a christian. And upon opening the Bible, we found it fully to sustain

this conclusion ; for the only evidence in proof of our son-ship, we are there authorized to rely upon, we have shown to be, not water, but the witness of that Spirit which " beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." And as Mr. Campbell's creed, rejects this kind of testimony, and substitutes another, wholly unknown to the Scriptures, and that can, in no case, be depended upon, we found here another strong reason for rejecting his system.

The next feature of the " reformation" that has passed in review, is that rejection and condemnation of creeds, universal among Campbellites, and their professed exemption from sectarianism and party spirit. And here we proved that the circumstances of the case render creeds and confessions of faith, expedient, if not absolutely indispensable ; and that their existence, instead of necessarily engendering strife, is the most likely method of preserving peace ; and that it cannot be otherwise until human nature is remodeled, and the children of men brought to see " eye to eye." On this subject, it was also shown, that while Mr. Campbell glories in having no creed, he gives evidence in his own person, that " great men are not always wise ;" because he has a creed as much as any Methodist, Presbyterian, or Baptist ; the only difference, being, that theirs is printed, and may be known as their religious belief, while his, though scattered through his writings, and proclaimed by all his teachers, has never been printed in a

separate form. Here too his anti-sectarian pretensions were examined, and found to be so utterly groundless, that while he professes to aim at the destruction of sectarianism, it would be difficult to find more bigoted and furious sectarians than he and his party; and that his terms of union require all christians to receive his semi-papal notions, instead of the pure doctrines of the gospel; and thus he would destroy sectarianism, by building up one great sect under his own banners, and by substituting Campbellism for christianity. This we found to be the tendency, and we honestly believe it to be the design, of all his labors and professions to promote a union among christians.

The last article of the system, to which our attention has been directed, is its rejection of a Divine call to the ministry. On this point, in addition to explaining what is meant by such a call, and meeting the principal objections urged against it, we fully proved that a ministry divinely appointed did once exist in the church, and was continued down to the close of the New Testament. And upon these facts we rested the controversy; for in the absence of all proof that this ministry has been taken away, we are bound to infer that it still exists. But this proof has never been given, nor can it be. We have, therefore, been conducted to the conclusion, that every true minister of Christ is still "called of God as was Aaron;" and that every professed proclaimer of the gospel, who acknowledges he never received this call, fur-

nishes proof, not only of a heretical creed, but of his total lack of authority for what he professes to do.

We have now taken a rapid survey of the leading topics to which our essays have been devoted, and these include the prominent features and pretensions of Mr. Campbell's system. Such a system, we consider a gross caricature of christianity, and of a tendency so deleterious, that every good man ought to oppose it. For though we are constrained to hope that these doctrines exist only as a deteriorating ingredient, in the minds of many whose lives manifest the presence of true piety ; we find it, at times, extremely difficult to believe that Campbellism, in its full and perfected form, can be otherwise than wholly incompatible with experimental religion, and genuine christianity. Be this as it may, it is unquestionably of evil tendency, calculated to lull sinners to sleep, and induce them to rest in the form of godliness, while they deny, and are wholly destitute of the power.

Since these essays have been in progress, we understand that Mr. Campbell has paid some attention to them through the Harbinger. What his strictures have been, we know not. For though, in the habit of arrogating to himself a great deal of fairness and fearlessness in regard to his opponents, in this instance he did not choose to favor us with any number, or numbers of his Harbinger in which our remarks were noticed. We do not mention this, however, by way of complaint, but only to let the

world know that when Mr. Campbell censures those who oppose his water system, for failing to furnish him with copies of their productions, that he condemns in others what he practices himself. Perhaps if his remarks had fallen in our way, we might consider it necessary to extend our essays a little further; but having never seen them, we have not the power of a reply; nor do we much regret it. For in this case, we presume, he has not departed from his usual course, as a controversialist, which we consider to savor of any thing else, as much as it does of candor and fair reasoning. His ordinary course has been to evade the force of that reasoning which he was wholly unable to refute, either by a sweeping contempt of those who use it, or by charging them with misrepresentation, and endeavoring, by seizing upon some incidental point, to call off the mind of the reader from the question at issue; and we have no reason to suppose that our strictures have shared a different fate. Be this as it may, we feel very little anxiety on the subject. To enter the arena of controversy with the great champion of the "ancient order," or with any of his little champions, is entirely beyond our ambition. Had this been our object, it might, long since, have been effected. Even during the publication of these numbers, we have had several opportunities of "changing shots," with some of the exclusive gospel teachers of the day, who appeared to be full of fight, and anxious for the conflict; and had we been desirous to expose them, as

individuals, to the scorn and pity of an intelligent community, we had, and still have ample means at command. But to engage them seemed not the most likely method of eliciting truth ; and as it would, virtually, have called us off from that examination of Mr. Campbell's doctrines which was our object, we have let them pass, and kept on the " even tenor of our way." Our object is now accomplished. What we have written is before the reader, who will, we hope, be competent to judge for himself, whether Campbellism be of God or of men. As to what Mr. Campbell or his adherents may think, or say, in relation to our feeble efforts, we feel very little solicitude. Among them are individuals whom we esteem and love. To obtain their ill will, is by no means desirable ; but to court their favor at the expense of the truths of the Bible, would render us guilty in the sight of God, and contemptible in the estimation of all good men. We have written from a sense of duty, and in the fear of God ; and let them speak or write about us as they may, we feel a clear conscience, and so far as personal or party ambition and vanity are concerned, are not aware of the least anxiety of mind.

We are now about to take leave of the subject. In the present form, we shall not resume it ; and its further prosecution, under any other form is, at present, a matter of entire uncertainty. We take no delight in what is called religious controversy ; and have never engaged in



it except when convinced that the cause of truth required it. Such have been our convictions on the present occasion. We had beheld doctrines which we believed to be of the most dangerous character, taking root among the people. These, rendered doubly seductive by the confident manner and acknowledged talents of some of their propagators, had spread into different sections of the west, deluded many souls, and were leading them to inevitable ruin. This system, we were satisfied, could not bear the test of sober, Scriptural investigation ; and we considered it our duty to aid in setting it before the world in its true colors. A sense of duty, therefore, induced us to commence these strictures ; and numerous assurances that our labor was not in vain, from various individuals in the surrounding states, have encouraged us to prosecute the subject thus far. Throughout the whole, we have aimed at candor and fairness with our opponents. That we have, in no instance, given a slight erroneous coloring to any of their sentiments, is more than we dare affirm ; but we are confident that this has been done in no material point, and know that we have not intended it in any matter, however small. And if through ignorance, or hastiness, our statements should, in any respect, be chargeable with misrepresentation, we are sorry for it ; and shall be ready to correct the error, whenever we are satisfied of its existence. But in truth, we are not conscious of having written any thing under the influence of that sort of ag-

gravation of spirit, that would be likely to produce exaggerated statements. With Mr. Campbell and his partisans, as individuals, we have no quarrel. We bear them no malice, and wish them no evil, but all possible good. We do not, however, expect their friendship. Experience, long ago, taught us that many of them do not soon forgive those who expose their doctrine; and that they are ever ready to cry out, "persecution, and misrepresentation." To such a charge, we shall plead, not guilty; but hope to bear it unmoved. With us, it is a small thing to be judged of men. We are conscious of our approach to the judgment seat of Christ, and under this consciousness have we written. A few years more, and all controversy with us, and our opponents, will be lost in the grave. The light of eternity will unfold the truth. And whatever the result may be, we have, so far as honesty of purpose is concerned, no fear of the scrutiny of that Day, in regard to one thought or sentence we have written, concerning Mr. Campbell, his doctrines or his followers. Our prayer is that we, our opponents, and all our readers, may *know* the truth and *do* it, and be prepared for spending an eternity free from error, sin and suffering.

THE END.

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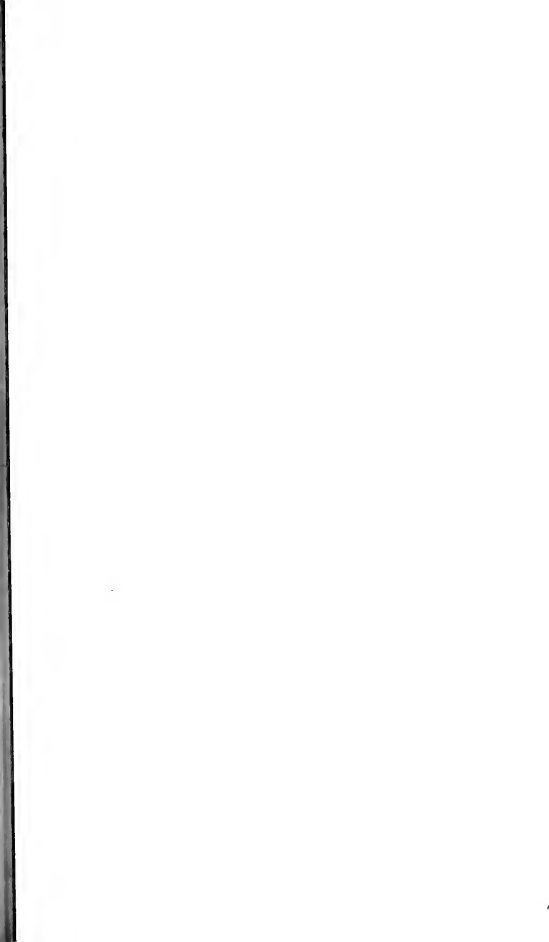
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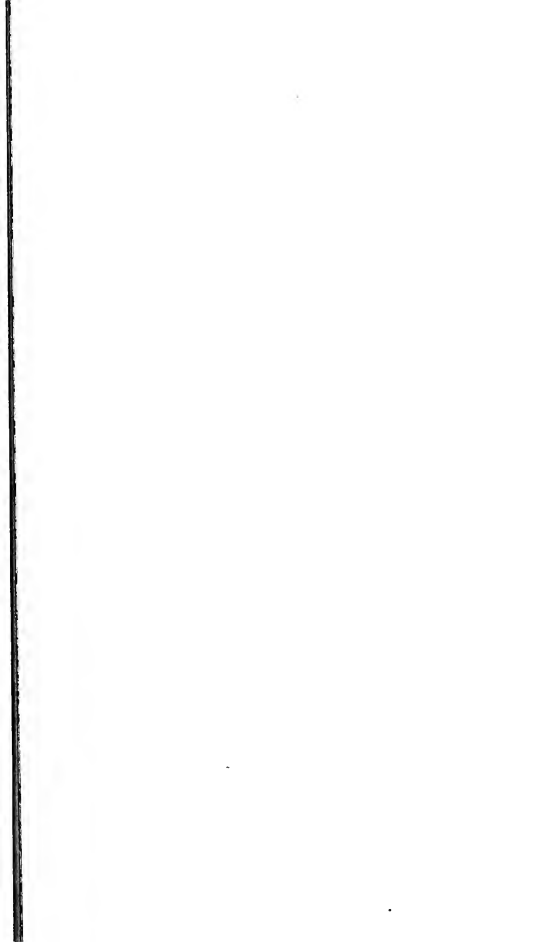
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